



TRANSLATING THE WORDS OF THE BUDDHA
KHYENTSE FOUNDATION TRANSLATION CONFERENCE

March 15–20, 2009 Deer Park Institute, Bir, India

**Buddhist Literary Heritage Project
Conference Proceedings**

**Alex Trisoglio, Khyentse Foundation
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Conference Resolutions

The teachings of the Buddha have brought immeasurable benefit for sentient beings for many centuries. Therefore, for the benefit of all beings today and in the future,

We resolve to adopt the 100-Year Vision, 25-Year and 5-Year Goals developed at this conference, under the name of The Buddhist Literary Heritage Project. These are:

100-Year Vision

To translate and make universally accessible the Buddhist literary heritage.

25-Year Goal

To translate and make accessible all of the Kangyur and related volumes of the Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries.

5-Year Goal

To translate and publish a representative sample of the Kangyur, Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries and to establish the infrastructure and resources necessary to accomplish the long-term vision.

We resolve to make every effort to invite the participation of the masters and holders of all lineages and to invite the many translators who were not present in this conference to join us in this effort.

We resolve that the interim director of the Buddhist Literary Heritage Project shall be Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche.

We humbly request Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche to select, in consultation with key advisors, the leaders and members of the working committees who will create the structures necessary for this project.

We resolve and request that Khyentse Foundation provide administrative support for the initial phases of this project.

We resolve to develop all the tools and resources necessary to achieve the goals decided on in this conference.

We resolve to undertake this project in the spirit of universal Buddhist fellowship, drawing on the wisdom of accomplished masters throughout the Buddhist world.

Pledges

What	Details	Who	When
<i>Translation</i>	To translate 10 volumes of the Sutra section of the Buddhist Tripitaka	Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche pledged his Nitartha Translation Network to work with Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche	
<i>Translation</i>	To translate the 22 volumes of the Buddhist tantra	Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche on behalf of his Dharmachakra translation house	
<i>Translation</i>	To translate the entire Prajñāparamita in the Kangyur, as well as related volumes in the Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries	Pema Wangyal Rinpoche on behalf of the Padmakara translation group	
<i>Translation</i>	To translate two major sutras (<i>Yabsei Jalwei Do, Dode Sachupa</i>) from among these four: <i>Completely Accepting The Root of Virtue Sutra, White Lotus Sutra, Meeting Of Father And Son Sutra, and Ten Stages Sutra</i>	Tsechen Kunchab Ling, seat of HH Sakya Trizin in the US in consultation with Paldor, Gene Smith, Zenka Rinpoche, George Washington University and Jawal Nehru Institute of Sanskrit Studies.	In 5 years (by 2014)
<i>Translation</i>	To translate <i>100,000 Verses of Prajñāparamita</i>	Robert Thurman	
<i>Leadership</i>	To act as interim leader and caretaker	Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche	For now
<i>Secretariat</i>	To provide interim administrative support for the initial phase	Khyentse Foundation	For now
<i>Secretariat</i>	To serve as central contact and communication	Contact: Linda@khyentsefoundation.org	For now
<i>Training Translators</i>	To organise a working committee for training and translation standards	Tom Yarnall	June 2009, June 2010
<i>Training Translators</i>	To research existing programs, methods for translator training	Catherine Dalton, Cortland Dahl	
<i>Training Translators</i>	To train two new western and two new Tibetan translators	Tsechen Kunchab Ling, seat of HH Sakya Trizin in the US	In 5 years (by 2014)
<i>Training Translators</i>	To train 10-15 additional translators through the Rangjung Yeshe Institute Buddhist Studies Program	Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche on behalf of his Dharmachakra translation house	In 5 years (by 2014)
<i>Tools and Resources</i>	To research tools and resources for translation	Jake Dalton and Steven Goodman	Summer 2009

What	Details	Who	When
<i>Tools and Resources</i>	To develop website	Betsy Napper, Michele Martin, Jules Levinson, Jeff Watt, Phil Stanley, John Dunne, Adam Pearcey, Derek Kolleeny, Gene Smith, Joan Nicell	
<i>Tools and Resources</i>	To research bibliography about what has been translated into French for Kangyur, Tengyur, and <i>gsung 'bum</i>	Gwenola Le Serrec and Padmakara	Dec 2009
<i>Tools and Resources</i>	To provide XML assistance, and access & integration with Chuck Muller's Digital Dictionary of Buddhism. To help coordinate activities in East Asia, recruit other people in China, Japan and Asia	John McRae	
<i>Tools and Resources</i>	To make available 150 volumes of searchable Tibetan texts	Matthieu Ricard	
<i>Tools and Resources</i>	To assist with finding Tibetan texts online (e.g. at idp.bl.uk at the British Library)	Jake Dalton	
<i>Tools and Resources</i>	To make available a Filemaker Pro database with list of translations (searchable Tibetan/Sanskrit)	Phillip Stanley	
<i>Community</i>	To continue to develop LOB's Translators Guild.	Jessie Friedman and Jules Levinson	
<i>Collaboration</i>	To coordinate collaboration with Tibetan Lamas	Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche	For now
<i>Publication</i>	To work on publication and editorial issues	Larry Mermelstein, Bob Thurman, John Canti, Wulstan Fletcher	
<i>Priority Texts</i>	To identify priority texts	Gavin Kilty	
<i>Fund raising</i>	To provide data supporting fund-raising material	Phil Stanley	
<i>Communication</i>	To begin to capture and formally maintain a living document expressing the current status of the BLHP, such as resolutions and strategic relationships, current committees, and open issues of strategic nature. For comment and resolution from all participants, produced monthly.	David Lunsford	

1. Introduction & Welcome

The Khyentse Foundation Translation Conference “Translating the Words of the Buddha” was held in Mañjushri Hall, Deer Park Institute, Bir, India from 16-20 March 2009. Before the conference, many of the participants met with HH the Karmapa in Delhi. He reminded participants of the honour and responsibility of being translators, as they are transplanting the dharma to the West and other areas of the world where the dharma is newly spreading. He cautioned that sometimes translators can become prideful, and they should become aware of this and bring themselves back with the motivation of love for sentient beings, which should be the principal motivation for their work.

The conference in Bir began with a recitation of the refuge prayer and “The Sutra of the Recollection of the Noble Three Jewels” in Sanskrit by Raji Ramanan, in Tibetan by Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, and in English by Steven Goodman.

March 16, Morning – Welcome: Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche

Welcome to the Khyentse Foundation Translation Conference “Translating the Words of the Buddha.” It is my great honour to serve this conference under the guidance of Kyabjé Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche. Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, who is known as the great Khyentse, was a visionary master who revived many lineage transmissions that were close to extinction. He was the main inspiration of the Rimé movement in Tibet. Like him, our current Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche is a great pioneer. That we are gathered here is a clear example and expression of his great vision. I believe this conference has great potential for us to move forward the translation of dharma to its next phase. To do that, we need a great visionary master like Rinpoche and great, learned translators like all of you. I’d like to invite you to fully participate in building this vision of translating the Buddha’s teachings and I hope that all our work at this conference will serve as a strong condition to bring together the community of translators, scholars and lineage masters so we can push the torch of wisdom that eliminates the darkness of ignorance. When Rinpoche requested me to serve as the

conference chair, I didn’t really feel that I was qualified or capable of serving in a conference of such magnitude. And I told him that he’d probably got the wrong person to chair the conference. But with his great compassion, he asked me to serve as the chair and I truly appreciate his blessing. I’m happy to serve here and be part of Rinpoche’s vision for this conference, and I’m really happy to be here with all of you today. And please do not see me as a chairperson who’s here to tell you what to do, but rather please regard me as a friend who’s here to serve you and serve Rinpoche and his vision, and to do whatever I can to help facilitate the conference so that our communications will be clear and effective, and so that this conference can be of great benefit to all beings. Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche will be presenting the key vision of the conference this morning. I hope you’ll all enjoy your stay here at this beautiful Deer Park and please let us know if you have any comments or questions, or if there’s anything we can do to improve the conference over the next few days, and we’d be happy to accommodate as much as we can. Thank you very much and welcome.

March 16, Morning – Message from HH the 14th Dalai Lama (letter)

I am happy to know that Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche is convening a conference of dedicated translators with experience of translating from Tibetan into English in Bir during March 2009.

The primary object of the Buddha’s teachings is to enable sentient beings to transform their minds. This can only be effectively achieved if they are available in a language that the listener or reader can understand. Although there seems

to be a custom of paying respect to the scriptures from afar in all Buddhist societies, the purpose of such books will be much better fulfilled if interested people can actually read them and understand them in their own language.

When I am reading I am often reminded of the great kindness of the scholars and translators of the past who translated a vast array of Buddhist literature into Tibetan. Over the course of several centuries, small teams working together made books available to Tibetans that allowed a deep understanding of the Buddha's teachings to take root in Tibet. It was this understanding that later found expression in the many books composed by Tibetan authors. Therefore, it gives me great pleasure to know that there are experienced translators today, similar to those of the past, who are working steadily to translate Buddhist books from Tibetan into English, which will undoubtedly make an invaluable contribution to a deep and lasting understanding of the Buddhist tradition in Western lands. Je Tsongkhapa writes

that when you listen to the Buddha's teaching, you should do so with great joy, with a smile on your face. This surely applies to reading his teaching too; however, readers will only smile if they can readily understand the words before them. This is why clarity in translation is so important.

The Buddha advised that if his followers were to meet regularly in friendship and harmony to discuss their concerns it would contribute to prolonging the life of his teachings. This is the spirit in which this conference should take place. Of course, the time will come when it may be helpful to reach a firm consensus on how to translate Buddhist terms and concepts into English, but for now what is important is to exchange what you have learned, discuss decisions you have reached, and benefit from each others' understanding. It is my hope and prayer that your conference will be enjoyable as well as fruitful.

[Letter dated 29 January 2009]

March 16, Morning – Remarks from HH Sakya Trizin (letter)

Firstly I want to encourage you in this very important and worthwhile endeavour. As there are so many non-Tibetan speaking people who are very eager to learn dharma it is very important to have good translation and good ways of presenting dharma. So all of you there at the conference should work hard so that we can achieve perfect presentations of the dharma in non-Tibetan and non-Sanskrit languages. This will also create great merit and through this so many people can attain liberation and enlightenment.

Whether you come to doing translation of the dharma through academic and scholarly interests or through the desire to practice both will lead to better dharma. When you know the deeper meanings of the dharma then you will have the aspirations to practice, so the academic path will lead into the practice path. When you learn the deeper meanings as a practitioner your practice will develop well. My main translators are both academics or scholars and practitioners, as are many of the other well-known translators among you.

There are a number of important issues that your conference could address. The authenticity of translations is a problem. We should try to emulate the translations of the olden times transmissions of dharma from India into Tibet. At that time all the Tibetan translations were done with one Indian Master and one Tibetan translator working together. Of course at that time the situation was very different. People

had no distractions, they were fully devoted to that work and they were not just ordinary persons, but all noble ones. In that way their translations were perfect. Of course at this time it is almost impossible to be just like them, but we must try at least to follow their ways of translation and it is best to have two people, Tibetan and English, working together.

I also feel that we must always translate even if imperfectly. Nobody can make the perfect translation from the beginning. But at least we should translate, and then somebody else from that base can make it even more pure, and then again somebody else can again translate it, and in that way eventually we aim to have the perfect translation.

In doing translation work it is very important not to translate in haste in the midst of being busy with our general life. We must devote our time to the translation. We must have time to think carefully and chose the right words and we must read the commentaries on whatever we are translating, because commentaries make the meaning clear and without fully understanding the meanings one cannot translate correctly. Many root texts are very vivid and condensed. Tibetan words are very evocative of a great depth of meaning; so many short phrases can contain a lot of very condensed meanings. Thus only through the commentaries can you understand the real meaning in that very short phrase, and be able to translate it correctly.

The need to restrict the distribution of tantric texts that you choose to translate needs to be addressed. Secret tantric texts should be translated and only distributed to those who have the authority and qualification to read them through having received the empowerment from an authentic Master.

While the Mahayana teachings should not be secret and can be translated, printed, published and distributed generally, the tantric teachings, particularly the highest tantras, should not be allowed to be read except by people with the relevant empowerment. Of course, they should only be translated by those that have had the relevant empowerment. As it is said

*If you explain the tantras without empowerment
And do the Meditation of that profound meaning,
Even if you comprehend the meaning correctly
You will manifest the hell realms not liberation*

Moreover it is not enough to just state or write the restriction as people do not believe this and take no notice. So a controlled method of distribution is required. There are

serious consequences to the practitioner who causes tantra to become accessible to people who are not qualified to access it, to the ongoing transmission of the tantra itself, and to the unqualified people who receive it. Therefore it is necessary that we make a strong and genuine effort to deal with this.

There are of course issues of resources so that people to have the time and space to translate well. Sponsorship should be worked out. Experienced teachers especially those who have a close connection with the West and English people should decide what should be translated and then work out sponsoring for that. A network of translators is a very good idea. Otherwise someone else is translating the same text, which is a waste of energy and time. They should exchange information so they do not unknowingly repeat the same translations and they can help each other choose the right terminologies.

I will note your progress with interest and I wish your conference the greatest success. We pray that you may live long and fulfil your noble works!

[Letter dated 16 June 2008]

March 16, Morning – Message from the late HH Mindrolling Trichen (letter)

It is wonderful to know that such a conference will happen soon and that the highest level of authentic translation is being done for the spread of Dharma throughout the world. His Holiness is very concerned about the translation of key Dharma texts and was very happy to hear about the conference. His Holiness was also very pleased to be asked to be an honorary patron of such an event and is happy to be of support and sends many blessings for the

success of the conference. His Holiness prays that it will benefit all sentient beings by encouraging the preservation and proliferation of profound Dharma texts.

I do hope this letter and His Holiness's endorsement may be accepted and be of benefit for you and for the conference.

Sincerely, Secretary, On behalf of His Holiness Mindrolling Trichen.

[Letter dated 8 November 2007]

March 16, Morning – Message from HH the 17th Karmapa (letter)

I am very happy that many lineage masters, translators and patrons have gathered at the Deer Park Institute in Bir, India, to engage in the supremely auspicious activity of "Translating the Words of the Buddha". The work and vision of Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche in convening this, the first Khyentse Foundation Translation Conference, is an inspiration and encouragement. May the limitless activities of the Khyentse lineage serve as an example of the sublime

to benefit all beings in a manner suitable to each individual's needs and wishes.

Translating the words of the Buddha and commentarial treatises from Tibetan into English is a necessary foundation for the genuine study and practice of the Buddhadharma for English speakers. Similarly, future gatherings of this nature will provide the necessary basis for study and practice in other languages. The preservation of the precious dharma of

scripture by translating texts from Tibetan, Sanskrit, Chinese and so on will definitely benefit from this meeting, and from the cooperation and collaboration amongst translators and the panditas who guide them. I rejoice that this important work

has begun in earnest and offer my heartfelt prayers for this endeavour to be meaningful.

With my prayers and good wishes

[Letter dated 21 February 2009]

March 16, Morning – Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche

Please consider these truck noises as sound effects, part of the package of being in India. Without this, you wouldn't have the right atmosphere.

I don't get inspired easily, but when I first went to Tibet I visited the Sakya monastery, and there I saw a statue of Mañjushri hand made by the great Sakya Pandita, and I was very attracted to this statue. I actually wanted to reproduce a replica, and I wanted to take a photo, but photography was not allowed, so I had to bribe the temple keeper with quite a lot of money, and he only allowed one snap. I took that, and fortunately it came out. And as soon as I arrived here in Bir, work started and it took almost one and a half years to finish this statue, with help of many lamas and skilled sculptors, and I'm happy with result. And I wasn't only inspired. I don't do very many prayers and aspirations, but I aspired in front of you, Mañjushri, that whatever I do, I'll do something that will benefit dharma.

This was the location of the old Dzongsar Institute, and this room used to be the main hall where the teachings were held. So I can say that in the presence of this great Mañjushri statue, blessed by so many great masters like His Holiness the Dalai Lama, His Holiness Sakya Trizin and many other masters, I think Dzongsar Institute has produced some of the best students so far. And all were trained in front of this statue, so to speak. And when Dzongsar Institute moved to Chauntra, I consider that is another of my aspirations coming true in the presence of this Mañjushri.

I guess many of you are expecting me to say something about the purpose and vision of this conference. When I read your replies to our survey about the purpose and vision, I must say I was very heartened to discover that almost all of your thoughts and ideas are exactly the same as mine, and they are better thought out and more far reaching. So I guess we're all well tuned and aligned, and I consider this is a very good sign. But it also means that what I'm going to tell you this morning contains nothing much new. You've already heard it all. You already know it, and in fact I've plagiarised your visions and aspirations.

Whenever people have asked me about the purpose of this conference, I've found myself saying something rather vague and evasive. I do understand that conferences are usually expected to follow a specific agenda; the problem is there's so much we need to talk about, that I've found it extremely difficult to pinpoint where to start. At the same time, it's precisely because there's so much to talk about that this conference is being held.

One of the first Tibetan translation conferences ever happened about twenty years ago as a result of the efforts of Doboam Tulku Rinpoche, who is with us here today. And more recently, a translation conference was held hosted by Light of Berotsana in Colorado, which included a lot of important discussions. I find this very encouraging, and I would really like to see many more of these kinds of conferences in the future.

For now, though, we need to set the agenda for this conference, and rather than limiting ourselves to examining and discussing all the short-term projects and issues we're currently facing as individuals, I'd like us to take a much broader view. I'd like to suggest that over the next few days we start the process of mapping out exactly what needs to be done during our lifetimes and beyond in order to ensure the preservation of Tibetan Buddhist texts. Basically our agenda is to write the agenda for an ongoing translation conference, one that never closes, as all the attendees continue to consult and work together in pursuit of one goal.

For decades now, individual lamas and translators like yourselves have been putting a great deal of effort into translating the dharma into many different languages, and you've been doing it in spite of the almost total lack of support that translation work receives, and always under a lot of pressure. It's quite amazing what you've achieved. And you've almost always done it alone. This brings me a lot of encouragement. If you can do so much alone and without much support, it means we can do much better together and with a little more support.

As we consider what will need to be done for the future of the Buddhadharmā, it will become clear we have to aim

much higher than merely translating the odd book here and there. In fact I believe the only way for us to achieve the enormous task we face is by finding ways of working together – not only among translators, but also the sponsors, teachers, and students that are the ultimate beneficiaries of your work. Over the years, such collaborations have been quite rare, and it’s an aspiration of mine that we’ll work together far more closely in the future

Of course this tendency of working alone may have something to do with tendencies of Tibetan lamas. Generally working in groups is not common among Tibetans, especially lamas – why go through all the pain and agony of working with others when you don’t have to? After all, when two humans try to work together it always slows a process down and is often frustrating, and for quite a number of projects it isn’t necessary. As long as tasks are quite small, something that can be completed by one person, school or lineage, being individualistic isn’t really a problem

Unfortunately, there are some projects that by their very nature, e.g. because of their enormous size and complexity, simply can’t be achieved by individuals or even a small group of translators. And I believe translating a large portion of Buddhadharma – all those texts brought from India to Tibet more than a millennium ago – for the West is a big problem, not something that can be achieved by individuals. There’s so much to be discussed, but I’m not a translator – I haven’t translated one page let alone an entire book – yet for some particular reason I find myself associated with this conference, mostly due to the Khyentse Foundation.

I can imagine that this situation is worrying for some of you real translators since enthusiastic amateurs tend to be a little naïve. And Tibetan lamas like me can be quite naïve. So out of this naiveté and inexperienced mind, I have come up with some areas of discussion I’d like to propose for this conference:

- To identify challenges faced by those translating Buddhist texts into modern languages, e.g. how to train the future generation of translators, and how to attract the very necessary attention of lamas
- How to build up the necessary infrastructure and financial support
- For us all to be aware of where we are now in translating Tibetan texts for the modern world, and where we’d like to be in 2109, which also involves a heightened awareness of how precarious this situation has become.

When this conference was announced, many people responded positively, but understandably a few were

apprehensive – e.g. ‘is this just another Tibetan conference where everyone is expected to be polite and agree about everything?’ Or ‘is this another pointless conference where a bunch of translators dig their heels in and insist on doing things their way regardless of what the others think?’ Some translators have even declared quite openly “I only work alone” and said they don’t believe in conferences.

I have also heard that some mischievous people have speculated that the purpose of this conference is only to translate Kangyur and nothing else, and that other more immediately needed texts will be shelved. I’d be surprised if you believe that. 1000 years ago the great patrons and dharma kings had absolute power and wealth, and they were able to direct translators to drop everything else and focus entirely on one project. But those days are long gone, and such a thing couldn’t happen today – unfortunately. Anyway, in spite of many dilemmas translators face, there’s one thing of which I’m certain – we must translate. You’ll probably think I’m exaggerating, but I think it’s possible that the survival of Tibetan Buddhism could depend on its translation into other languages.

I find difficult to fathom the attitude of some lamas who think that to study and practice dharma, one must first learn Tibetan. I can see that it’s necessary right now for some people to learn Tibetan, but how necessary will it be in 100 years? Tibetan culture and Buddhadharma are two different things, and someone wanting to study the Buddhadharma in 100 years shouldn’t need to learn Tibetan.

HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche spoke of the gratitude Tibetans should feel to great dharma patrons like King Trisong Deutsen. He would say “even if we Tibetans covered the entire world with solid gold and offered it to the king, it wouldn’t be enough to repay even a fraction of his great kindness”. And he wasn’t referring to his social and political projects. The king’s highest priority was translating Buddhadharma into Tibetan. This required great finance, but it was not the only price the Tibetans paid. Hundreds of devotees and students who attempted the journey to India to gather teachings died of terrible situations like the heat and strange masala food they encountered on Indian plains. Yet in spite of the tremendous human sacrifice and unimaginable cost borne by the king, this single undertaking may be the one truly phenomenal Tibetan accomplishment.

One reason for prioritising translation work is that we must continue to make available sacred Buddhist texts for non-Tibetans who wish to study and practice the Buddhadharma. But this is not the only reason for us to put all our energy into producing well-translated texts. The Buddhist heritage and culture that permeated Tibetan life for

more than 1000 years has all but disappeared in India, its country of origin. The great lotsawas who translated Buddhist texts into Tibetan effectively rescued the Buddhadharma from premature extinction. So what was virtually lost in India can now be found in Tibet, and it's becoming available again in India. As inauspicious as it may sound, when we look at the current situation in Tibet, and the waning interest of Tibetans themselves in their own language and culture, it's clear the same near extinction could happen again.

So by translating Tibetan into modern languages, you may well save a vast swathe of Buddhist civilisation from extinction. The living traditions of Dharma that still exist today – for example, in Japan, China, Thailand and Burma – have only survived because they had the foresight to translate the original sacred Buddhist texts into their own languages.

Also those in the Tibetan community still able to understand and communicate in classical Tibetan are rare. In about 100 years there will be almost no Tibetans who can read the words of Kangyur and Tengyur and understand their meaning, and very soon it will be too late to do anything about it.

So when I learned that Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche wants to translate the Kangyur into English, I was very encouraged. And translating the Kangyur into English is a massive task. It's not the sole purpose of this conference, but we can't ignore it. Very few Tibetans read or study the Kangyur nowadays, and many wonder if it's worth the effort to translate, especially considering the great resources that would be involved. Among Tibetans, the Kangyur is used as a merit-making object. Monasteries buy a copy and then shelve it. The text is read when offerings made, but little effort is invested in understanding the meaning of each word. Offering is powerful way of making merit, but using Kangyur solely for this purpose is neither to be admired nor emulated. In fact it's a big mistake. Chinese, Thai and Burmese Buddhists still read and contemplate the sutras, but Tibetans rarely do. My concern is that if we decide not to translate these texts, this Tibetan mistake will be both reinforced and perpetuated.

Every religion has an original book – Christians have the Bible, Moslems have the Koran, and Buddhists have the sutras. These are of vital importance because what Buddha taught us must always be the final word on any given subject, not what we find in the Shastras—and definitely not what's to be found in the Tibetan commentaries. As dharma is taught more widely in the modern world where attention to detail and authenticity is valued, people are going to wonder what Buddha himself said. The trend today is for teachers,

priests, scholars, politicians and fanatics to obscure the original meaning of important texts by interpreting them in a way that supports their own personal agendas. This happens in all religions including Buddhism, and when such problems arise, our beacon of truth can only be the words of Buddha.

If you were to ask someone naïve like me what should be translated, what I would set as priorities? What's at the top of my list? Culturally and emotionally, I have no choice. Without doubt I'd say the teachings of the Buddha – the sutras – should take precedence over shastras. Then as the Indian shastras carry more authority and weight, they should be translated before those by Tibetan authors.

Tibetans have developed the habit of preserving and propagating the work of Tibetan lamas and seem to have forgotten the sutras and shastras. And Tibetans often promote the teaching of their own teachers over the words of the Buddha. So I have no trouble understanding why Tibetan Buddhism is sometimes called 'Lamaism'. Today our vision is quite narrow, and instead of dedicating our limited resources to translating the words of the Buddha, we pour them into translating the teachings of individual lineage gurus, biographies, their long-life prayers, and prayers for the propagation of the teachings of individual schools.

Therefore we must now at least plan for the translation of the Kangyur and Tengyur. This immense translation effort can only be accomplished if we join forces. We need to work together and establish a spirit of ongoing dialogue and mutual support among translators and all those involved in the art of translation, and start planning for the future – what I've already described as an 'ongoing conference'. We need to decide where we want this process to be in 10 years, 25 years, 50 years and 100 years.

If one person tries to stubbornly shift a huge boulder on their own, all that is achieved is a terrible drain on their energy and time, and the boulder still won't move. But the cooperative effort of a dozen people can move the boulder easily. If we collaborate to move our own huge boulder, I believe that, at the very least, we'd be able to work out how to be more efficient and use our resources more wisely.

While we're aware of the urgency of the situation, I must also point out that we'd be deceiving ourselves if we imagine this generation of translators will see the completion of all these projects, and I can see many of you are over the hill anyway. In Tibet it took seven generations of Tibetan kings to translate the texts we have today. And some believe there are still some sutras and shastras that have yet to be translated into Tibetan. But we must lay the foundations by devising a practical and far-sighted plan to ensure that everything that should be translated will be translated.

The challenge of translating volumes of Tibetan texts the size of mountains is only one aspect of the enormous task we're faced with. There are others equally daunting that we need to start thinking about, such as revising and updating existing translations into current, everyday language. It's an unnerving prospect, I know, but the sacred texts must always be available in a form the present generation can understand. And there are other issues like, who does the best job, the scholar-translator or the practitioner-translator?

Let me say a few words about this. When we encounter the more inscrutable passages from the Buddha's teachings, it is usually to the interpretations of the great practitioners that we turn. If a practitioner-translator is our ideal because he or she has greater emotional authority than a scholar-translator, we should also remember that many of these great practitioners aren't particularly well versed in Buddhist philosophy. They even take pride in their lack of worldly knowledge, for example in their literary skills, telling us that they're glad they didn't waste their time studying 'all that intellectual stuff!'

And among Tibetans, not only practitioners but even scholars like *geshes* and *khenpos* often didn't know how to write their own name, let alone a whole sentence. So imagining we can rely on the linguistic expertise of these great beings may be over optimistic.

We also have the problem of dealing with modern phenomena like political correctness. Can we translate 'arhat' as 'destroyer of enemies'? Can this literal translation help us to understand its meaning, when these days it might easily be confused with religious fanaticism? So not only will Buddhist scholars play a vital role in translation, but also as arbiters of social sensitivities. And their role may not be less important.

And we also need the help of good editors, to ensure that the language the text is being translated into is well written. Just because someone can understand Tibetan doesn't mean they can write well in English. As we know, Tibetan is written very differently from English, but is using a kind of pidgin English to reflect Tibetan style a good solution? Wouldn't it be better for translators to perfect their written English style so they can present Tibetan ideas in way readers can understand?

Perhaps it's insignificant compared to other things, but also I've noticed that few translators have been able to render prayers into other languages and retain the metre necessary to chant them easily. So practitioners inspired by transitional forms of chanting usually do so in Tibetan. I think we should start thinking about how we can produce prayers in other languages – particularly those usually practiced in groups –

that are written in metre so that students can chant or sing them in their own languages.

Although it's true that we have not been blessed with great Dharma patrons like King Trisong Deutsen, all is not lost, because modern technology is on our side. The great translator Vairochana, when he needed to find a specific manuscript, had to walk from Tibet to India, and it took him several months. Today, thanks both to modern technology and to projects like Gene Smith's TBRC, it's possible to download Tibetan texts to your computer, even from somewhere as backward and remote as Bir—if the internet is working, of course.

I think the process we begin here could now continue online quite easily in an ongoing conference of ideas and mutual support. And we shouldn't limit who we bring into our conversations. Not only should we be talking to other translators, but also to all those who support the translation process, the teachers, the linguists, the writers, and, of course, the students. By opening up the lines of communications between ourselves, we could start working out how we can help each other more efficiently.

Whenever I visit Manhattan I'm so amazed with foresight of the Americans who laid out the city. They had such vision! The way they planned the layout of the streets and avenues, Central Park, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, it's as if they knew what would be needed in the twentieth century, and beyond. This kind of visionary planning is absolutely necessary in order to achieve our goal.

Therefore, I would like to call on all of you here today—the translators, the *Rinpoches* and the sponsors—to aspire to be as visionary as those great New York City planners. After all, what we are going to do will have a far greater impact on the world than the laying out of a city ever could. We will be making available to people of all nationalities, everything they need to follow the Buddha's infinite path to liberation, which is the only source of true happiness and enlightenment.

So we must learn to work together and start to work together. The stakes are high, and practically speaking it's our generation who'll shoulder the responsibility of ensuring that the Buddhadharma continues to flourish in the world – and many of you are already past the mid point, so we're talking not so long. We need to make thorough and effective plans for the future and put them into action.

As a dharma student myself, I'm amazed when I read texts by the great *Lotsawas*, like Vairochana and Chogroluyi Gyaltzen, and remember just how much I personally owe them. They endured unimaginable hardships to bring the

Buddhadharma from India to Tibet. Without their compassion, devotion, determination and sheer hard work I'd never be able to appreciate the words of Buddha in my own language. We have the opportunity to emulate those great beings – the translators, scholars, panditas and saints of the past – by taking on the task of translating and making available the words of the Buddha to as many people in this world as possible, in their own languages, now and for centuries to come.

All that I said is what you said – I just brought it together.

(Q) Thank you for an excellent keynote. You raised all the right issues, and it's very humble of you to say that it came from us. I understand and appreciate your observations, and agree that the Kangyur and Tengyur need more effort, but these are texts originally from Sanskrit and we often have the Sanskrit – what's the role of Sanskrit?

(A) That's a very important question – I don't have the ability to answer. I'm not a translator – I see myself as a lobbyist. I told Ponlop Rinpoche I know nothing about translating and my so-called students are no more than my victims, and among them none really have translating skills. But I have observed the activities of Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, and these two Rinpoches quietly sitting here (Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche and Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) have done a lot. They have done amazing things. Maybe they can give a better answer. I'm only a lobbyist.

(Q) There are efforts to support translations, but what about the area you mentioned of supporting Tibetans to learn to understand the classical language of sutras and shastras?

(A) It's beginning to happen, and even more in Tibet. It's encouraging. But when we talk about Tibetans, if we talk about the bigger picture, the Tibetan population is very small. How many really speak and read classical Tibetan? Even if all Tibetan youngsters were really to push hard to understand classical language, I don't see it happening in the next 50 years. But there are efforts, e.g. those of Alak Zenkar Rinpoche, who's a fanatical devotee of saving every single word and the meaning of it. Definitely there are efforts.

(Q) What about shedras?

(A) When I commented about the waning enthusiasm of Tibetans for their own language, I was thinking of shedras. They should take more responsibility. But there's a habit here to study things like the Madhyamika, and people think "why waste time on language, grammar, etc? These are worldly things that are not important." I think that kind of residue is still there.

(Q) But what when the few remaining Tibetans who can understand disappear?

(A) For now, when I speak, Tibetans understand. But – and this isn't Tibetan humility – if you ask me to write in Tibetan, I know there's big deficiency in my written Tibetan. It's not even that it's not good; it's not there at all.

(Q) I hope this issue can be addressed.

(A) Yes, and Tibetans should be involved. And Chinese is similar – many Taiwanese, Chinese, and Singaporeans don't understand classical Chinese, and don't understand the Heart Sutra as it's classically translated

(Q) I'm intrigued by your self-identification as lobbyist. If we assume that this conference is a success in the sense that the participants develop a plan, however complex and difficult, and we have momentum towards translation of the Tibetan Buddhist canon, do you have any expectation for how your lobbying will proceed following that? This is my first trip to India, and I've been impressed with the vision of your Khyentse Foundation. Sometimes lobbyists may have to keep their plans close to their chest, but what can you say now about how you perceive the future?

(A) I'll keep part of the answer close to my chest, as you well put it. I closely watched the Obama campaign, and the attitude of working at a grass roots level impressed me. I'm sure great beings have all kinds of visions and things that beings like me can't understand, but some of you know that I've always been a little reluctant with the way that many lamas emphasise things like buildings, infrastructure, and silver or gold plating. I've always wanted to push my energy in doing things like this. Let's hope the world economy will improve. I plan to put a lot of my energy in really begging in every corner of the world for this project to happen.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) I'd like to express my gratitude to Rinpoche for making this conference possible – it's really one of most important things that such a group could do. Since the late 1960s I have researched, and found that barely half the Sanskrit texts exist. My father HH Kangyur Rinpoche said this would happen in the future with Tibetan texts as well. What Tibetans translated will meet the same fate. A few lamas brought books and preserved them, but they will disappear in the world, which is why he took so much trouble to bring hundreds of books from Tibet. He'd say that we would need to translate them into other languages in future so that we could translate them back to Tibetan. And in the 1980s I went back to Tibet, and even my nieces and nephews couldn't speak Tibetan, let alone read or study the language. I needed Chinese translators to communicate with my own family. This will happen very soon in Tibet itself. People won't be able to read, let alone understand the texts – so it's really important to translate them into other languages. And HH Dudjom Rinpoche was very keen in the

1970s to collect the Tibetan originals, and when he travelled in the West he found many students who wanted to study Buddhadharma but who could not speak Tibetan. Also HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche said it's important to translate the words of Buddha into English and eventually into other languages. Maybe can start with the Prajñāparamita sutras, and gradually get things done. All our teachers were keen and supportive of this project, and I'm more than happy that such things might be possible in the future and fulfil the wishes of my late teachers. I'm extremely grateful to Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche and all who are participating in this conference, especially the translators.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) I'd like to say that more than your appreciation, we need you. Don't say you don't know how this will happen. We need you. Your involvement is very important.

Some of you know that I'm very lazy, and I don't go to conferences, so I don't know how conferences are held and constructed. This is why Orgyen Tobgyal Rinpoche's words are very important here. I really appreciate you're here – thank you for coming. Now that you're here, I must make the most of this opportunity and use you in your full capacity so

to speak. This conference has to bear fruit, and for this reason I've asked my good friend Ivy to facilitate and moderate. I have learned a lot from Ivy about how to focus on projects and not go astray, and she has helped a lot on many occasions with Khyentse Foundation planning and meetings. She has always offered her help, and this time again she generously came all the way from San Francisco to help us. Thank you, Ivy, for coming. There are several reasons I wanted her to facilitate. She's not a translator, and many translators here are male, so I thought it would be quite good to have a female. Ivy has 30 years of experience in international business and HR management – her professional background includes roles in high tech, international finance and biotech companies – we're in good hands.

(Ivy) I'd like to start by expressing my gratitude to Ponlop Rinpoche and Khyentse Rinpoche for making this conference happen, to all Rinpoches present, and to every participant who showed up, against all odds. And as a dharma student I'd like to thank every translator past and present, without whom we wouldn't have the words of Buddha.

March 16, Morning – Introductions

Following Rinpoche's address, the participants introduced themselves to one another. They stated what they would like to see by the end of the week, and also gave some personal information that is not on their biographies. The introductions by the Rinpoches present are included below:

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) My name backwards is "estneyhk." What I'd like by Friday is for us to decide how many sutras, shastras and Tibetan commentaries we'll translate within five years. Something not in my bio: I like German food.

(Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche) My name is Jigme. I came here with a completely blank slate. Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche said I had to come here, I don't know if out of kindness or some other reason, so I came. I'd like to let you know I'm not a translator. I'm just here because Rinpoche told me to come. I feel like someone dropped in middle of something, trying to discover what this is all about. But I'm here. And I'm here among so many illustrious speakers. I want to know if we're interested in translating Sanskrit teachings into Tibetan, or Buddha's teachings into English. Buddha was not just a teacher, a human – as we know from the Prajñāparamita – a lot was translated from the Naga

language into Sanskrit and then Tibetan. And when Atisha was in Tibet and found all the teachings that were in the Samye library – in this library there are texts I have not seen – he said it shows the teachings of the Buddha were not just from Sanskrit. Nor were they just from Chinese, but from many different languages and worlds. So if I'm really to believe that is true, I'd like us to agree by the end of week, what is the scope of what we're here for? Is it to translate Buddha's teachings that just came from Sanskrit? Or every teaching the Buddha gave that was available and is still available in the Tibetan libraries? What's our goal? Something not in my bio: I haven't read it. I'm really not a translator. I know neither English nor Tibetan properly, and can barely read Tibetan. But I can't say I haven't received teachings – I have received many from great masters that I consider equal to Buddhas, such as HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, HH Kangyur Rinpoche, HH the Dalai Lama, and

HH Sakya Trizin Rinpoche, and I know that all of them from my point of view are rimé. But I don't know what the rimé movement is, and I'd also like to know what that is, as everyone talks about that. I'm not translator and have no idea what I'm doing here. So please don't expect me to say something on the day I'm supposed to be saying something.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) My name is Pema Wangyal. As Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche said, I'd like to know this week that our translators know the scope of task to undertake. As Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche mentioned, there are more than 100 volumes of the Buddha's teachings, since there are many translations from Sanskrit to Tibetan. And to translate all the Buddha's words into English, we also need the Chinese and Pali, as lots of texts have not been translated into Tibetan for many reasons. I've seen in reports that many translators are discouraged, as people consider them marginal, and they have no funds – I agree it's a problem. But at same time I'd like to offer a quotation that my father gave me, a line written by Tri Ralpachen, who continued the work of Trisong Deutsen. He encouraged translators, and said both the very generous benefactors and also the very knowledgeable and experienced translators will be able to perfect their two accumulations of virtue through their interdependent connection. But this also relies on generating bodhicitta. So he insisted that when benefactors make donations or translators do work, they need to cultivate true bodhicitta. And then the generous benefactors and translators will both accumulate merit and wisdom. It's an incredible opportunity for the benefactors here. It's such a privilege that we have the opportunity to support such work to benefit countless sentient beings. The Buddhist teachings are based on nonviolence and they are a source of world peace, so this is an incredible way to accumulate virtue for generous benefactors. So I'd like to request that they support translators and Rinpoche's vision. It's time to accumulate virtue. And for translators, it's an incredible way to progress along the path. I appreciate all your courage. And as Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche mentioned, it would be incredible if during this week we could know how much there is to translate, and what does the "words of Buddha" cover? Is it everything? HH Kangyur Rinpoche read the Kangyur 27 times and gave the transmission 23 times, and he tried to understand and connect all lineages of the Kangyur and Tengyur in Tibet, so HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche considered his lineage so important to preserve. When people translate sutras, maybe they don't receive the transmission. But he said transmission is important for sutras as well, otherwise it's hard to translate them properly. And it's important to have a good teacher to refer to, a person who'll

help us understand Tibetan language, the text, and the meaning. Translation is very difficult without their help. And also the translators themselves must study. According to the little knowledge I have, I believe that many Westerners are interested in translation, but many of their translations aren't readable. So they need to be rewritten, and it takes years. So in future translators must study their own language, otherwise we have to do the work two or three times. This is expensive and takes time. So our teachers have also told us that translators should be very knowledgeable in their own language. Something not in my bio: I like saving and freeing animals. It's my greatest joy. And I am a friend to street kids and I like to help them. These are my favourite things that I like to do.

(Lama Doboomb Tulku Rinpoche) I started writing "lama" in front of my name when I was in Delhi as head of an institution. I'm not a translator. Far from it. I'm not even a lobbyist. I was involved in a translation conference in 1990, part of a program by Tibet House. And out of his kindness and compassion, Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche invited me to this important and unique conference. My personal interest is to be involved in inter-religious and cultural activities at a human level. From a distance, the names of leading translators can sound big and unapproachable – but when you meet them, everyone is approachable. So meeting at a human level is very important, as HH the Dalai Lama always emphasises. By the end of the conference, I'm interested in a broad consensus on developing a modern day lexicon and dictionary.

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) I'd like to see us develop a sense of community and friendship, and get to know each other. And I hope you all have the chance to get to know Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, so we'll have a good relationship of great translators and great teachers here as one community with one vision and one goal of bringing the wisdom of the Buddhadharma into Western languages. Whether it's the Kangyur, Tengyur or works of Tibetan masters – we appreciate the same goal. Hopefully the translators and teachers will develop this concept. I would also like, as many others have already expressed, to have a tangible idea of the priority texts to translate, whether Kangyur, Tengyur or lineage teachings. I also think developing a clear organisational structure is very important. And at same time, some sense of room for individual translators is always necessary, and I can assure you there will not be an organisation that will take away all your freedom at the end of the week. Also I'm not a translator, and I'm not even a serious scholar. I just try to help translators relax by making jokes.

2. Defining the Vision and Goals

March 16, Afternoon – Defining the 100-Year Vision – (1) Introduction

The process to define the 100-year vision statement began with Ivy Ang presenting an overview of “what is a vision?” and then leading the group through a process of working in sub-groups to generate 11 draft vision statements that were then distilled by the whole group into a single statement.

Introduction – What is a Vision?

A vision statement:

- States the ‘What’, not the ‘How’ (we’ll get to the ‘How’ on Wednesday to Friday, but today and tomorrow we’ll focus on the ‘What’).
- States ‘What good for whom in the world’, in a short sentence. It doesn’t say how it will be accomplished.
- Inspires and reflects our aspiration towards our vision.

In defining our vision statement, we should think of ourselves as visionaries, and see things way in the future, way beyond the present – like the New York planners that Rinpoche mentioned. Or like Martin Luther King saying “I have a dream.” He saw the future, and it was somewhat fulfilled when Obama was elected. John Lennon’s song “Imagine” is also visionary – “Imagine there’s no countries.” We’ll do that this afternoon, and I’d like you to imagine and be visionary about what you want to see 100 years from now. Here are some examples of vision statements from the corporate world:

- Merck: “to preserve and improve human life”
- Disney: “to make people happy”
- 3M: “to solve unsolved problems innovatively”
- TBRC: “to keep the Tibetan wisdom heritage alive”

Most of you have completed the pre-conference survey, and there are lots of good thoughts there. Based on your responses, some examples for a 100-year vision could be:

- “The entire Buddhist canon and all major lineage texts are available in major languages to world”
- “All words of the Buddha are accessible in major languages around the world”

We’ll do that today, then tomorrow afternoon, we’ll go from 100 years and put a stake in the ground at 25 years, which I hope will be within most of our lifetimes. Some examples of 25-year goals include:

- Merck: “to become the pre-eminent drug maker in world”
- John F. Kennedy’s NASA mission was to dominate space, and he declared the goal “to put a man on the moon by 1969”

These goals are sometimes called BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goals). They allow us to put a goal down, a stake in ground, as the dream is so big. For example, our 25-year goal might be something like:

- “25% of the Buddhist canon and major lineage texts are translated into the world’s major languages”

Then from the 25-year goal, we will go to a 5-year goal. For example, TBRC’s 5-year goal is “In 5 years TBRC will be a comprehensive, globally accessible and useful Tibetan digital library and knowledge base”

(Q) When you have a goal, whether it’s for 100 years or 5 years, it’s usually for an organisation, but this isn’t an organisation, not yet. So whose 100-year goal is this? Is it just us in this room? And if not, who is the circle this organisation consists of?

(A) Right now it’s just this room.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) I think this morning many of you talked about community – I think the community is happening, and for now let’s keep it to this community, and by Friday I hope we’ll have a concrete answer about the organisation.

(Q) The examples of the 100 year vision, such as “to preserve and improve human life” for Merck, seem very specific. But John Lennon’s song completely liberated me from all these examples. Can we imagine anything we want? Is that what we’re supposed to do in 100 years? Is it meant to be specific and realistic, or unrealistic and maybe attainable?

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) The idea of 100-year or 25-year goals is just a framework. And maybe there’s not any particular organisation at this point, but just a framework of where the translation of Buddhadharma is going, and how can we as translators and scholars support a vision that we all share. You can project and dream where the transmission and translation of Buddhadharma in the West would be in 100 years if you had the resources.

(Q) One possible wording of a 100-year goal is to make it possible to learn dharma and about dharma in any language. I have a question for all translators – is the goal to transmit dharma? Or also to provide texts for people who want to

learn about Buddhism through translations? There’s a potential difference between users of texts who are dharma practitioners and students of religion, academics, etc.

(A) We’ll start the creation process and let the collective wisdom arise, and it’ll hopefully be answered by the end of the day.

Here’s the process we’ll follow:

(1) Pick a partner – each pair will have 10 minutes – and co-create a 100-year vision. You can fight all you want during the 10 minutes then at the end you have to agree and be ready to share.

(2) Once you’re done, you will have a single statement, then 4 of you will get together to produce one statement. As before, you have to agree. At the end we’ll have 11 co-created statements. We’ll put them all up, and then we have to choose.

March 16, Afternoon – Defining the 100-Year Vision – (2) Draft Statements

11 Statements Generated in Breakouts

- 1) Every dharma text existing today will be available in major languages such as English, Chinese, French and Spanish by March 16, 2109 at 3pm Auckland NZ time, and not Indian elastic time.
- 2) Yes We Can! Proceed with bodhicitta to accurately translate all of the Buddha’s teachings including Indian and Tibetan commentaries into clear and simple words in English and all major languages so that the tradition of study and realisation can be preserved and replicated around the world.
- 3) To publish the most significant Indo-Tibetan Buddhist works in three major world languages.
- 4) For Buddhism to have genuine influence in world events, and for persons to have achieved realisation due to the wide availability of readable translations.
- 5) The full range of the knowledge developed within Indo-Tibetan Buddhist civilisations has been made accessible in all major contemporary languages and has been integrated into the world’s cultures.
- 6) Make all Buddha’s words available in all major languages.
- 7) The major literary collections of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism shall be clearly and accurately translated into English and made widely available for the study and practice of

the dharma by March 16th 2109 at 3pm Indian Standard Time.

- 8) Everything that does not exist in Tibetan should be translated into Tibetan to complete the scope of the Tibetan canon.
- 9) There is universal access to all the materials which enable people to know about and put into practice the authentic Buddhadharma.
- 10) English translation of the texts of Tibetan Buddhism in 3 categories – Kangyur, Tengyur and Tibetan teachings – prioritised according to the streams of dharma that combine texts in all three categories.
- 11) (Our thoughts are included above) Also: A mechanism to ensure continuing accessibility in accord with the media that are available in the future, and study tools to use the materials so they are accessible from many points of view.

Group #1

(Q) How to define ‘dharma text’?

(A) We say ‘dharma text’ not ‘Buddhism in Tibet’ as so many teachings of the Buddha are available in languages other than Tibetan, such as Chinese, and not just Sanskrit. There were so many teachings available during the time of

Atisha in Tibet that weren't all translated from Sanskrit or Indian, so we wanted to say 'all dharma texts.'

(Q) Would that include Stephen Batchelor?

(A) Of course!

Group #2

We said "clear and simple words" because, for example, Patrul Rinpoche liked to use the words everyone speaks, as opposed to some English translations that use words nobody understands.

(Q) I don't find Buddhist texts to be easy to read, and I don't find sentences are simple and clear. But there's a lot of magnificent writing in English – and I assume also in French, German, etc. – that's profound and powerful and illuminating and not easy to read. The hard work of reading things that are not easy to read often enables me to learn something, as I have to work so hard. When it can be clear and simple, that's great. But when a writer is inspired and something comes out in a different way, it can be very uplifting. That's my experience as a reader in English.

(A) Point taken. We'd like translations to be in English that's "as clear and simple as possible."

Group #3

We were guided by realism and pithiness. We looked at the last 100 years and what was accomplished, and what's reasonable in the next 100 years. And it needs publishing, not just translating. It needs to be made available. And we realise not everything can be done – so what criteria would be used? We left it as "most significant" and we felt we should focus on translating Indian, Sanskrit and Tibetan, mostly Buddhist, and literary works into 3 major world languages (e.g. English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic), and we decided to leave that choice to the great wisdom of the group.

(Q) How to choose what are "most significant" texts? Is it by tradition? And there's also a wide discussion around what appears to be quoted most among the commentaries.

(A) We had some criteria – e.g. texts cited in 10 or 25 different other texts. There are questions about the wisdom of prioritising around textuality and book learning, as opposed to things that are less cited but nevertheless very valuable.

Group #4

We spent most of our thought in identifying the types of materials that should be translated – texts and sadhanas. And we'd like material organised into categories, so people are not just presented with a mass of material but able to understand the structure. And the widest visionaries among us wanted Buddhist values to take a place on the world stage,

so given the models of vision statement you gave us, we went with a broad goal.

(Q) I don't understand the connection between Buddhist influence, people having achieved realisation, and wide availability of readable translations.

(A) Without the availability of teachings, it's hard to get enlightenment. But the translations alone won't do it – vast and important though they are. We need materials that people can understand, and even the best-translated texts won't necessarily be understandable – we need another step.

(A) The idea is that people could attain realisation based on English texts rather than Tibetan or Sanskrit texts.

Group #5

We're concerned that in 100 years, knowledge of the civilisations should be understood as not only religious, but also in terms of its arts and sciences – i.e. knowledge of medicine, poetry, linguistics, etc., and also that Buddhism and Buddhist civilisations won't be seen as an "Eastern" thing that can be juxtaposed to something "Western", but rather integrated. We envision that it will no longer be seen as something foreign. So while individual cultures will maintain their autonomy, they will begin to adapt and use Buddhist knowledge.

(Q) There's no consensus on Indo-Tibetan works, and if by "knowledge" we open the door to oral teachings, that's an additional challenge. The translation of literary work is one thing, but that's not the same as creating a whole new work based on translating the oral tradition.

(A) Yes – we weren't sure if the word "knowledge" is too broad or limited. Is it just intellectual knowledge or experiential knowledge as well? We felt it has valences of experience as well.

Group #6

There are parts of the Kangyur we don't have, and Naga languages – but we decided to leave it open, inspired by the vision statements of Disney and others.

(Q) What circumscribes "Buddhas' words" is a subject of active debate, especially as regards the early and late Mahayana – and this could open up the project a lot. Does it include ventriloquism through shastras? E.g. Aryadeva's words aren't the Buddha's – but what if they're commenting on words of the Buddha?

(A) That depends on funding!

Group #7

(Q) Why restrict translation to English?

(A) Realism! We had some broad notions, and we became more realistic. It's hard to dream realistically! It sounds like an oxymoron to me. The thought here is that this is still a very vast project, but it's eminently doable.

(Q) What is "major"?

(A) That's a placeholder for fights to come later. We thought of citations, and also this will depend on funding. But a place marker of that type is useful – it's broad, but marks the point deliberately, as some things probably do need to be excluded – and it's a statement of exclusion.

(A) Also we hypothesised that it's the entirety of Kangyur, but we're not so sure about the Tengyur.

(A) We wanted to include other collections.

(A) Just translating into English isn't realistic. French, German, Russian, etc. will continue to be translated – so we need to coordinate with other groups.

Group #8

We'd like to include Tibetan as a major world language in which things could still be rendered.

Group #9

(Q) What's "authentic" – how to define that, and what does that imply about some lineages or texts that are inauthentic?

(A) We want the word in there, and this would be a discussion on "how," and also what would be translated – but in particular how it would be translated.

(Q) To me the question is "what."

(A) We could be talking about materials, and enabling people to know and put into practice – it's the 3 types of prajña, and if these are in place we could speculate we'd have authentic Buddhadharma.

(Q) I like universal access, which suggests we're not limited by poverty or distance. But is that how the Vajrayana will be available?

Group #10

We decided to stick with English. We felt it's imperialism for us to make suggestions about other languages. We're happy to facilitate translation into French, Russian, etc. but it's not our business. And we wondered should we translate Kangyur because it's the words of Buddha, or the Tibetan oral teachings given the precarious state of Tibetan Buddhism? What is the most urgent problem? We couldn't decide – we can't translate everything in all three categories, but we think a reasonable outcome might be to pick sets of texts that work together from those

three categories in an attempt to live the oxymoronic dream of dreaming practically.

Group #11

We agreed we need not only Kangyur and Tengyur and commentarial literature, but also newly written commentaries that might come up during the next century. And in terms of all languages, I'd rebut what was just said. Translators working in English were invited to this conference, but translation into other languages is going on, and needs to be included. For example, clarification from lamas shouldn't need to be asked again by other groups. And Russian is especially important – there's a lot of Tibetan work there, and they look at and use Kangyur. So Russian is essential. And Lhakdor, the Director of the Tibetan Library, suggests that to repay the kindness of India, we should not forget Hindi and Indian languages. And in terms of making texts available to practitioners and the more general public, we agreed with that. And if we don't have an emphasis on material for self-transformation first, just focussing on making the whole body of literature available could be something like preserving ancient Egyptian literature without a living tradition. And in terms of "how," in addition to having all texts available, we'd like to have a mechanism for maintaining their availability. We need to have a group that keeps them available – not just texts, but also study tools like glossaries and comparisons of traditions, etc.

(Q) I'd like to include Japanese as language – it's a major language and there's lots of pseudo-Buddhist culture in Japan.

(Ivy) Let's look at the 11 statements and see if they answer the question "what good for whom?" and try not to get into the how, we'll do that after we define our 25-year goal tomorrow. Let's first get to a vision statement.

(Q) In making 100 year vision statement, I'm assuming we're articulating what people in this room want to be responsible for causing, not just "there should be" but more "we will..." is that the case?

(A) Yes – it'll be igniting a vision but perhaps not seeing the finish line, just like Martin Luther King. It's not how – you don't even know what the next generation's 'how' and 'what' will be.

(Q) What about major languages?

(A) It might even evolve.

(Q) At what point do we raise questions from the list?

(A) I'm doing "elements you like" first and then "what we have to wrestle with."

(Q) Many of us didn't answer the question "what good for whom?" Maybe we need to address that.

(A) To repeat what Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche said – we are operating on the assumption that it's just people in this room for now, and then something more organised later.

(Ivy) It's the stakeholders in this room for now – but in 100 years, it'll be translators, students, etc. – and this group is igniting something for that future generation.

(Q) It's also important to include an aspiration, as most of us won't be here in 100 years. So it's not just who is here, but aspirations for those who will come after us. So if we

can't translate into languages other than English, it's important that someone can and will.

(Q) What we're talking about can be boiled down to 4 or 5 questions, including:

- What is the corpus of source texts?
- What target languages do we want to translate into?
- What auxiliary functions beside pure translation do we include – e.g. study aids, dictionaries, databases, etc.
- What organisations/participants should be involved? How should we be organised to both do the work and keep its continuity?

March 16, Afternoon – Defining the 100-Year Vision – (3) Selecting Themes

The group then listed and discussed themes they liked from the 11 statements, and voted on which ones they would like to retain as part of the overall vision statement.

Most important themes

(Themes to be retained in vision statement):

- **“Universal access”**
- Dual purpose: knowledge and practice, or study and realisation – **study and practice**
- **Target for translation is a broad group of texts**, not a specific narrow group
- Representing Buddhism in ways that while they are inclusive of spiritual sentiments aren't just defined as such – e.g. knowledge of **Indo-Tibetan Buddhist culture and civilisations** – i.e. knowledge that Buddhism is of relevance beyond just religion, e.g. to psychology, epistemology. The mission statement shouldn't look like a 'religious' mission statement or a 'missionary' type of mission statement.

Other themes

- “Bodhicitta” (or maybe “love” as used by HH Karmapa)
- Write the mission statement in the active voice
- Genuine influence (in terms of “for whom”)
- “Major literary collections”
- Material being presented in categories with structure (e.g. #10 has 3 categories)
- Tools for learning and practice – we need all tools necessary, a comprehensive set, but not everything in the world
- Keep “major languages”
- “Preservation”
- “Continuity” and “accessibility”

- Literary quality in the target language
- “Consistency of terminology around all this” which also opens up a way of putting different materials with different vocabularies together – i.e. some kind of way of harmonising, so that everything is accessible
- “Unbroken transmission” and “continuity of teachings being maintained” through this process (this is part of “preservation”)
- “Publish” and also publishing should include the idea that it was edited and annotated

(Q) What's the longest vision statement we might go for? E.g. #7 is long, #3 is terser in a Sanskrit way.

(A) I'm going for the essence – once we have the essence, we can shorten it.

(Q) Who is this mission statement for? For the press? For us to work with? Depending on the target audience, we can then decide on the appropriate length.

(A) The stakeholders now are those here and extended dharma students around the world, sponsors who are dying to give you money.

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) This 100-year vision is a great exercise – to start with a dream, to think big. I would think it doesn't matter if the statement is short or long – even one page isn't too long for a 100-year vision, but to put into one line would be pretty interesting for me.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) I don't know whether I can clarify this – we were talking about building community

and who this vision is for. Let's say we're all hungry, so we want to eat. And our vision is to eat pizza, so we decide that we'll eat a pizza in one hour – and that's our one-hour vision. And within that, for example in half an hour or 15 minutes, there are questions like who will cut cheese, who will bake the pizza, and who will turn on the oven. This is good. If you're hungry, you almost don't have to invite people. They will come, as they're hungry – and I think you're all hungry. So you don't have to be member of the pizza eaters, you will just join. I'm hoping you'll just come and eat. Our 100-year vision is the pizza, and 25 years is cheese cutting or salami or mushrooms and all this. It's important to come up with the vision statement, as is necessary for sponsors. They have to know this. And we need to know too, as we have to decide whether we'd like to eat pizza or not. You are hungry, so have to decide whether to eat pizza or chapatti – it's for us more than anyone else to have a direction.

(Q) It seems that all these questions about major literary collections are homing in on the question of translating the Kangyur. And it's being taken for granted that this is a good thing. It's a basic question. I'd like to challenge this idea. As Rinpoche said, we all know the Tibetan Kangyur is a large body of unread literature. If we translate this as a body into English, what's to stop it becoming a large body of unread English literature? The fact that it isn't read is extraordinary – how could this situation have come about? If the causes repeat themselves in the modern West, we'll have the same result. I know one of the reasons people are saying they don't read the Kangyur is that the language is too difficult and Tibetan has evolved somewhat. But what if one reason that the Kangyur stopped being read in its entirety is because of the kindness of all the lineage gurus down the centuries who distilled the sense of Kangyur and the teachings of the Buddha, and expressed them in a form that's easy to understand in a single lifetime? Maybe that's one reason why the Kangyur is not read. So in our situation, in 100 years when we finish this huge work, what will have we achieved exactly? Certainly there will be whole body of texts in

Following this discussion, the group then voted for their favourites among the 11 statements, and the three most popular statements were #1, #2 and #7. The group's next task was to synthesise those three into a single statement, but first there were some additional comments and questions.

(Q) Many of the 11 statements have the notion of translating “everything” and some have the notion of “important things.” Among the three preferred statements, #1 and #2 include everything and #7 includes “major collections.” Those are different statements, and we can't

English, and probably they will only be read by scholars, who are precisely the people who don't need translation in first place, as they can presumably read Tibetan or Sanskrit.

(A) There are many reasons it's not read – and one is definitely the nature of the translation, as it wasn't readable by ordinary Tibetans even though the Sanskrit is mostly easy to read. So if we translate the Kangyur in that easy-to-read style, people will read it. And secondly, you're right about the kindness of teachers, and there is a distillation, but that's within the cultural context of Tibet. I think it's important to create an opportunity for a similar distillation in the West that may not look exactly like the distillation in Tibet. And maybe in the twenty-second century the world will look different, and what's important and what people need to hear may differ. So the notion of one distillation that is good for all time isn't helpful. It needs to accord with the needs of the individual, culture, context, etc., and we need to create the opportunity for that to happen again, and one way is to translate the Kangyur and Tengyur.

(A) In the translation of the Chinese Buddhist canon, firstly there was a process of cultural digestion. Buddhism of East Asia is different from Buddhism of South-East Asia, where the Theravada tried to cleave to the canon. In East Asia, it's different. Texts came in, they were translated, and then the Indian or Sanskrit texts were discarded, and the translations became the property of East Asian culture. That process of digestion profoundly defined how Buddhism developed in East Asia. We shouldn't think of transporting Tibetan Buddhism to the West, but rather of using translation to create Buddhism appropriate for contemporary cultures. Second, in East Asia, the fifth century was the Madhyamika century, and the sixth century was the Yogachara century. And over the coming century, the texts translated will inspire different forms of Buddhism to be studied and practiced and I doubt we can predict that. But it should be our goal to facilitate that religious and cultural stimulation, and trust that the content of the scriptures will excite people.

simply synthesise them. We need to choose how much we'd like to translate.

(Q) Do you want everything or what's most important?

(Q) Is what's appealing about #1 that it includes “all texts”? Or is it something else that's appealing? It's

straightforward and simple – every text, major languages – and that’s it. Is it both?

(Q) We also need ancillary materials to help the digestive process of translations, and those are not present in any of these – do we want to eliminate that? E.g. when we say “access to dharma,” should we include oral commentaries, or synthetic materials like “this sutra became influential in X genre” as Chinese traditions do?

(Q) We should produce a very concise mission statement that would last for 100 years, and then an action plan that will last for 25 years, etc. So I believe the vision should be very concise, and that we should have a longer action plan. There are too many things we feel strongly about.

Suggestions for synthesis statements

- (a) To translate and make (universally) accessible the Indo-Tibetan literary heritage
- (b) To translate and make universally accessible the (Indo-Tibetan)(Buddhist) literary heritage for the purpose of study and practice

- (c) To translate in elegant and accurate style the heritage of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism for the purpose of study and practice
- (d) To enable the deeper understanding of Buddhism through the dissemination of Tibetan texts in the world’s major languages
- (e) To translate and make accessible the Buddhist literary heritage

(Q) “Dissemination” sounds like a missionary statement.

(Q) Do we exclude Bönpos when we say “Buddhist”?

(A) They can have their own conference if they want.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) We shouldn’t just say “Indo-Tibetan.” And if an Islamic guy from Kabul wants to translate a Buddhist text, we can’t force him to practice bodhicitta. Speaking as a lobbyist – and you have to have compassion towards lobbyists – when we say “Indo Tibetan,” half our potential source of funding is gone. But if we say “Buddhist” we have a better chance.

The group voted for their favourites among these five statements, and (b) and (e) split the vote almost equally. The group decided to finalise the vision statement the next day.

March 17, Morning – Orgyen Tobgyal Rinpoche

To all those gathered here today, led by our chairperson Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, I will speak a few words. This gathering is a gathering of major translators from all over the world, and I have no right or place to be in such a gathering. The participants are panditas and lotsawas, and I am neither a pandita nor a lotsawa. So if you ask me how did I come here, it’s because Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche dragged me here. And not only did he forcibly bring me here, but he said I have to say something. I normally speak a lot, so I’ll just say a few words.

(1) The first point I want to raise is that Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche is the incarnation of the great Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, and he has decided to convene this gathering of major translators from all over the world over five days, with the aim that something concrete will be established by the end of our time together. To have a resolution of what we want to do, just coming up with a plan is not enough. This needs to be translated into some accomplishments, into a fruit that everyone can see. Without

a concrete fruit, just speaking for five days won’t do much. It’ll just confirm what Patrul Rinpoche wrote, that when we talk all “our sounds are like echoes” as Buddha said, but these days it’s just echoes of echoes. So there will be nothing left except fading echoes. So my wish or suggestion is that we have a good plan followed up by action – something that everyone in the world can see with their own eyes, something that gives them food for thought.

(2) My second point is that for the task we are beginning, we should really look at the examples of what happened in the past. The example is the occasion during which the texts in Indian languages were being translated into Tibetan. The situation was that there were some great centres of learning in India, such as Gaya and Nalanda, and the great panditas were invited from these centres to Tibet. And there was also a group of lotsawas, a great gathering at Samye Monastery, and they proceeded by working together – with at least one pandita and one lotsawa working together. There can be many lotsawas of course, but all the past stories always refer

to an association of panditas and lotsawas working together. And ‘lotsawas’ were defined as those who could speak two languages, hence the symbol of the two-headed parrot. And they knew the words and the meaning, including the deeper meaning. Lotsawas never proceeded alone. Nowadays we have the equivalents of panditas and lamas learned in words and meaning, so it is in association with such a qualified holder of the knowledge that a lotsawa can proceed, in the same way that the earlier lotsawas and panditas worked together. In my case, I can read Tibetan, but don’t know any English. And if I go into bookstores, I can see a lot of books being published like explanation on thangkas and art and other such things. And when I ask about other books, there are all kinds of Buddhist texts about mind training, all kinds of aspects of philosophical views and so forth. But when I see all of them, I wonder about them. I cannot have a deep confidence in what has been done. In a few cases, such as the translations done by Padmakara, I personally think those must be quite authentic. But my reason is because of the presence of the two Rinpoches here, who witness and check the work being done. I feel the work must be authentic, as I know them quite well. So although I cannot read these translations, at least I put the books on my head.

I don’t have an idea that one language is superior to another, e.g. Tibetan is superior to English. I’ve read the explanation of the Guhyagarbha Tantra, and from that I understood the crucial point that lotsawas and panditas, lamas and translators should work together. That’s one of my deepest beliefs. Otherwise, someone could just take a text written in Uchen, slowly learn how to read and speak Tibetan at the level of 6-year-old child, and with the help of computers and a heap of dictionaries he or she might try to translate the text. In such conditions, I cannot feel confident about the likely results. I’m someone who is very direct and speaks bluntly, and that’s what I have to say in this august gathering of translators. I could also present citations, such as the commentary on the Three Vows, but I won’t go into that.

(3) The third point I want to raise is that for most scriptures in Tibet, starting with the Kangyur and Tengyur, it seems that before too long they will lose their usefulness. The reason is that first of all, all those scriptures define Tibetan culture, but with the state of affairs there, they’re useless for people’s daily lives. The fate of things that aren’t used is that they will wane and disappear. But even though there may not be such great luminaries as great Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thayé and Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, there are still very learned teachers inside Tibet. And the fact that throughout the world now there is a vast and growing interest in Tibetan teachings, culture and tradition, it makes

one think that definitely those texts should be translated. And so translating not only the Buddhist scriptures but also texts that describe culture, customs and so on will also be beneficial. So if we engage in such work, we should consider it as something extremely important. If we look at all the scriptures, the most precious are the Kangyur and Tengyur, and this is something that without any argument is equally respected by all traditions and the four main schools. We must begin with the Kangyur, and there’s no point waiting to do that. It won’t become easier, and there won’t be a better time to do so – the longer we wait, the less likely it is to happen. Earlier it was said that the main use of the Kangyur is to put it on the altar and respect it, and we don’t take it down to read it. But that won’t be better in future – there won’t be a time we suddenly take it down and start to read it. I think actually we’re already 30-40 years too late in beginning this task. If we had started 30 years ago, the outer facilities and technology were less than what we have now, but the inner favourable conditions to do this work were much more complete than today. There was a distinction in Tibet between the earlier period of translation and the later period. When we undertake this task, we should definitely go beyond the discussions and conflicts that arose in the past related to this ‘earlier’ and ‘later’ period of translation. I have a few things to say about this, but I won’t spend time on it. There is some controversy between the Nyingma and Sarma Kangyur, and whether certain texts should be included, and whether or not they are the words of the Buddha. But if we were to translate the Kangyur, then we could say this is the body of scriptures, the words of the Buddha. We’d have something to refer to. Of course there are many writings by accomplished teachers, and there are wonderful scriptures among those, but they are not scriptures universally accepted by all. So that’s why I say we should translate the Kangyur. If we don’t do that, then even though the favourable material conditions for lotsawas will keep increasing, the potential from panditas will keep disappearing. In 1962 there was a great gathering of all the lamas in Tibet, and if you look at how few of them are still alive in this world when you compare that gathering with similar recent gatherings, you’ll see what I mean.

(4) My fourth point is regarding this gathering. I thank Khyentse Rinpoche who hauled me here. Whoever listened to his words came here, and a few are not here, as they did not listen to his words. He has no qualifications as a translator, and he even has to get someone else to translate four lines of a sloka, but he has a very pure and excellent motivation. It’s better than making movies. Whether Rinpoche’s movies will help dharma I don’t know, but this

will certainly help. I think nothing much will be decided at this gathering, so we will need to meet again and again in the future. What could emerge from repeated meetings is that some rules and frameworks will emerge among translators over time. I have no suggestions regarding such rules and regulations, but the framework of structure of rules and regulations should reflect everyone's thoughts and meet with everyone's consensus. In the past it was OK to say you must do this or else I'll cut off your head or gouge out your eyes. But now there are great advantages and efficiencies if people get together, express their views and come to consensus. But that won't happen immediately. So in the beginning there will be a group that will decide about rules and so forth. But collaboration will have a stronger impact than those who are scattered.

(5) My last and fifth point is that when we say 'lotsawa', it's something special and precious, something crucially important. There is a story of a great Indian pandita who came to Tibet and couldn't find a translator, so he ended up becoming a shepherd. So lotsawas are crucially important.

And when we say 'those who speak two languages', which is the definition of lotsawa, you need to know your own language and master a second language in depth. And it's extremely important to consider how we develop our aspiration, the deep motivation that inspires us. I don't know much about this, but I've heard from my great teachers that if we don't have profound bodhicitta in our minds, and if we have other goals and motivations instead, it won't help very much. If you lotsawas are really going about your work in the best possible way, then we should have a deep respect for lotsawas. And we should have even more respect for those who come from countries other than one's own. That will definitely happen in the future. I think in the days when Vairochana and the three other main lotsawas were there, there was less respect than there is now. So now some 1300 years later, seeing all their works that have survived, we can really realise and conceive of their work with incredible gratitude. To the translators gathered here, some I know and most I don't, to all of you I say Tashi Delek!

March 17, Morning – Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche

Good morning everyone: Rinpoches, respected translators, great scholars, and everyone gathered here this morning.

Over the last century, many key texts of the Buddhist literature of all traditions, not only Tibetan, have been translated into many world languages. Translators in the past have done amazing work with limited resources and tools. Their dedication and passion for translating the words of the dharma is a great beginning to share the wisdom of enlightenment with this world. First of all, I'd like to rejoice in their work, the work of the great translators and their great teachers, and aspire to bring the remaining wisdom still in the source languages to our target languages.

As followers of the Buddha, "Buddhists," as we are called, we must have come to understand and appreciate the words of the Buddha. They must have resonated with our basic view of life and spirituality, and for that reason we became his followers. It would be quite ironic to claim to be a Buddhist but have no idea what the Buddha taught. But we know what our lama taught. The only way to genuinely follow the footsteps of the Buddha depends on whether or not we have access to his wisdom and his journey of awakening. That is why it is crucial to access the words of

the Buddha for Western Buddhists. The fundamental gateway to understand the wisdom of the Enlightened One is through the words of the Buddha, which have been translated for many centuries in Asia. It's not an exception in the West – you translators will be the medium through which the words of the Buddha will echo in the West.

The Buddhist canon exists in many languages, such as Pali, Chinese, and Tibetan. They complement each other by making a full and complete collection of his words. For example, some sutras in Pali don't exist in Chinese. Most tantras from the Tibetan canon don't exist in either the Pali or Chinese canons. All of these texts are the source of the commentarial traditions, from which have sprung many different lineages of Buddhism in the world – Tibetan, Japanese, Chinese, and so on. But what is common to all of us is this canon, which as Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche said, is equivalent to Christian Bible. The Buddhist canon is our most precious treasury of wisdom. This is true not only for Buddhists, but it is also a great source of wisdom for the world. Hearing the wisdom of the Buddha through translation will be a great contribution to world society, now and in future.

In the West, there is a movement to create a Western lineage of Buddhism. In America we lobby for American Buddhism. This is an excellent and inevitable evolution. This vision cannot be complete without having the totality of the canon translated into Western languages. So having the Kangyur in Western languages, starting with English, is crucial to establishing a genuine lineage of Western Buddhism.

I often explain this with an analogy. The Buddhadharmā is like genuine water, which has no colour or shape. It is pure and natural. This is genuine wisdom. All the world's different languages and cultures are like the container for this water. Without the container, the water cannot be preserved. Without water, there's not much use for the container. The container may change from language to language and from culture to culture, but the essence of the water is always the same, something we share universally. That essence is the words of wisdom, the words of the Buddha. The container is only a support to allow us to receive and enjoy the contents, the authentic Buddhadharmā. As translators, you are creating a new container for the water of Buddhism to be translated to a new culture.

The Pali Text Society in England has done an excellent job translating Pali texts into English. Chinese Buddhist traditions are also translating their canon into English. But the Tibetan Buddhist tradition has not yet started the project of translating their entire canon, even though sporadic translations of some sutras and tantras have been translated into English. However, under the vision of Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche, we're here to witness the dawning of translating the Kangyur, the Tibetan Buddhist canon. At this point my aim is to raise awareness and leave it to the Tibetan scholars and translators to assess how to approach the translation of the Kangyur. I've had some discussions also with Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche and he told me he has had this vision for 20 years or longer himself. Talking with other great masters about it, there seems to be a common passion or vision about translating the Kangyur. But due to the magnitude of his project, nobody has even dared to speak about it in a conference. So I'm happy to be the target of your arrows—shoot away!

There is much wisdom in the sutras that is not found in the commentarial traditions, like the Buddhist view of organisational science and the organisation of sangha. For example, the *Dharshachakra Sutra*, the *Ten Wheel Sutra*, discusses how a bodhisattva should rule a country. In this sutra, some vital topics are discussed, such as the view and function of military science – isn't that important today? It's a big question for all Buddhist practitioners. We have

questions about the military, commerce, and so on, and all these topics are discussed in this sutra. The answers are right here in this discourse. Whoever translates this will not only know the answer, but will answer questions of all Buddhists who share similar questions. In similar ways, there are numerous sutras and tantras that will be of great interest to modern society.

Another category of sutras important for modern times is the vinaya literature, which is commonly misunderstood as the “dos” and “don'ts” of monasticism. I have neither a romantic relationship with vinaya, nor am I personally passionate about it. But this pitaka is important for understanding Buddhist views on sociology.

On one hand, we could say that the language of the sutras and tantras is somewhat challenging and difficult. A lot of people think that the sutras are very difficult to understand. But on the other hand, the sutras are simply discourses between the Buddha and his disciples, or amongst his great disciples. So in some ways, the sutras are easier than shastras and Buddhist commentaries, which sometimes have thirty levels of outline to discuss a simple statement of the Buddha. When I studied madhyamaka, there were even forty levels in some sections. I think there is a way to maintain the language or feel of the original sutra in the style of a discourse. Keeping the language universally accessible will be very beneficial.

It would also be beneficial for individual sutras not to be translated by just one person, as each translator has his or her own distinctive style. I'd like to propose that each sutra be translated by a small group, as small as two, working together if at all possible. Two translators working together is already quite a noble achievement—you've reached at least the first bhūmi in order to do that! It is important to work together to ensure that the language and feeling invoked by the text match the original intention. Each translation could be the product of small groups working together with a scholar or lineage teacher, or experts on the source text, as was done in Tibet. I feel this would be best way to attain goal of universal accessibility. It may be that the first generation of translation will be more literal. Eventually, through editing and refining, it will become more readable. In the final translation, pidgin English would be eliminated.

In the old translation system in Tibet, translators of succeeding generations would improve upon the work of the previous translators. But in the West, there's no such room because of copyright law and intellectual property. So if you're working on Kangyur or Tengyur, I think if there's a way to open the door to such a process in the future – not

like Wikipedia where anyone can change what they like – but a procedure to refine and improve earlier translations, this would be quite important to contemplate. I feel one group cannot make every translation perfect. Even great Tibetan translators, those we think of as emanations of great beings, couldn't do it perfectly. There was a refining process by later translators, and even now Sanskrit scholars find mistakes. The 17th Karmapa did research and said that not all Tibetan Buddhist texts were translated from Sanskrit. Right now, scholars judge translations of Tibetan texts based on Sanskrit translations alone, but not on languages such as Prakrit. We cannot fully say that this is wrong or right, but there's definitely room for improvement. If there were ways for later translators to improve English translations, this would be very important in terms of perfecting the translations of the Kangyur, Tengyur, and Tibetan commentarial texts. Questions of copyright and intellectual property are important. I'm not against them, but we must find a way to work together. Another challenge here is that certain terminology in sutras and tantras is archaic, and much is very

particular to certain topics. We need good resources to aid translation, such as great scholars, lineage teachers and good dictionaries. We also need to consider the training and nurturing of future translators. Currently it is very hard for a young Westerner to learn Tibetan and find a good tutor and resources. On the one hand, it is good for them to have challenges to test their commitment and to allow them to glimpse what previous translators had to go through. On the other hand, this wastes a lot of time and resources. So we must create situations in which we can help produce quality translators with the limited resources we have today. There are many small translator training programs, but there is a need for reflection on how we can improve and have a fully equipped language school for Tibetan and Western students.

The last thing we want to do is make translations that are objects of reverence but are not used. We must use our translations in study and practice. It is utterly delightful to have had this opportunity to dream of translating the words of the Buddha together with such wonderful friends gathered in Bir today. Thank you.

March 17, Morning – John McRae, BDK Tripitaka Project

First, thanks to Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche – I'm deeply moved and grateful for this opportunity. I'd like to cover 4 topics related to the BDK Tripitaka Project: (1) Numata Yehan who founded the BDK Tripitaka Project, (2) how print/web distribution works, (3) organisation, (4) some observations that might be relevant for other translation projects.

BDK stands for Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (Society for the Promotion of Buddhism), and our aim is to translate the entire 100 volumes of the Sino-Japanese Buddhist canon. Actually there are 845 volumes, with approximately 85,000 pages, and 120 million characters of Chinese. I work out of the Numata centre in Berkeley, which is a subsidiary to the committee in Japan. The founder Mr. Numata died in 1994, and he was perhaps the greatest patron of Buddhism in modern times. He founded Mitutoyo, a company that manufactures precision measuring instruments, and 10% of the company's income goes to Buddhism. There are numerous Numata professors around the world. The Buddhist teachings that you can find in hotels in Asia were one of their earliest tasks. We started translation in 1982, and selected 139 texts to translate. I was originally involved as a translator. Then once we finish this first list, we'll move on.

We've got our hands full finishing phase one. They estimate it will take 100 years; I think perhaps 1000 years at the rate we're going. So far we have translated a variety of important texts such as the *Lotus Sutra*, *Vimalakirti Sutra*, several Pure Land texts, esoteric East Asian texts e.g. Yogachara, and Chan/Zen texts. These texts are finished and in book form, and will be made available for free with Web distribution. We have also translated Dogen's Shobogenzo and some Japanese Pure Land teachings. The initial list was meant to be representative of the most important Buddhist schools in Japan.

The initial mission was to produce volumes for practising Buddhists, and initially there was strong resistance to allowing annotation. But we discovered that most texts are used in college and university teaching, so annotation is allowed now. And we're open to having translators publish a lightly annotated version under BDK imprint, and a more densely annotated version on their own. On the Web (www.numatacenter.org) we use PDF files, and hope to move to a more dynamic representation using XML. We will also add hyperlinks, e.g. in margins we currently have references, but we could add links to jump to an electronic text or digital dictionary of Buddhism, or provide links to

individual terms or commentaries. There are links to the digital dictionary of Buddhism, which includes pronunciation, and to Japanese dictionaries now available in pirated PDF form. We are fortunate to have these rich resources, as the Japanese Buddhist studies tradition has a deep and rich history of producing research tools for the study of Buddhism.

We'd like to move to XML files, and add metadata and tags to allow processing of source texts in different ways for different purposes. XML tagging allows expanding and repurposing texts for different users in different forms. E.g. we can have Chinese on the left of the screen and English on right, and if you click on either side, the other side moves. Another view of the same document has the Chinese phrase by phrase on left and the English on right. We offer a Creative Commons License so people can incorporate our translations into their websites. From XML data we can produce text files, synoptic editions, online glossaries, etc. – it's like a "master tape," from which we can produce various types of output for distribution. So you can bridge difficulties of questions like "should this be easy to read for beginners or highly annotated for scholars?" as using a master tape helps solve that kind of problem.

We have an editorial committee in Tokyo that selects translators, edits translations and completes final versions. I've always been impressed at the editorial intervention and support I received. They go through translations line by line, notice if anything is missed and question the wording. Then the text is sent to Berkeley for bookmaking. We do English language copy editing then, but not content editing. And then we produce books and online versions.

I would like to offer some observations for other translation projects. (1) How to find, fund and interact with translators? There's no magic here. It's a question of scholarly and personal connections. Our funding is entirely from Numata Foundation, and Mitutoyo Industries that funds the Foundation. We're subject to the vicissitudes of funding, and we don't fund raise. We make no requests for donations as matter of policy. (2) Editorial policy: BDK solicits new translations, and there is no specific policy on how new translations should relate to what's present. In some cases we have acquired existing translations and put them under the BDK imprint for greater distribution. We have a policy of using no Chinese characters. (3) Guidelines for translators: there are some. We were given glossaries that I ignored. But the guidelines are firm in terms of translating things, not leaving things in transcription or transliteration, and not using any Chinese or Japanese characters. We have guidelines, but they are flexible. The BDK project has a

similar dream to what's being discussed here, and it has also established an initial list of texts, and a 100-year timeframe. And in certain ways, I hope the experience of BDK will be of some benefit to the translation of the Tibetan canon.

Questions

(Q) Is there a typical profile for your translators, e.g. are they academic or not? And also do you try to fund translators to the point where you are replacing their salary?

(A) Most translators are academic in some sense. In the early days, we paid \$195 per Taisho page. After my PhD I worked for a commercial translation company, and \$195/page was as good as I could get for translating potato chip wrappers. Now we pay more, \$300/page. The goal was never to support a whole career or salary. And it's always on a per page basis. When you're publishing texts with no annotation, such as sutras that have a storyline, this approach works nicely. But for abhidharma or vinaya commentaries it doesn't make sense to publish un-annotated translations – this is my personal view – and to do those well takes a huge amount of work per page. If you sign up to do BDK work, you get paid 60% on submission, and when you are finally finished (e.g. once you have responded to editorial questions, etc.) then you get the 40% balance. There were some translators that feasted off BDK, and now we're left with massive texts that need retranslating. It was an issue.

(Q) You have a glossary of suggested technical terminology translations, but people aren't bound to it – so do you have mechanism to allow readers to correlate different words for the same Chinese terms?

(A) Yes there is a glossary, but it's not terribly long. Editors don't force adherence. And it's not large enough to provide terms for the vast range of Buddhist scriptures. Even in what I've done from Chinese Chan texts to Indian sutras, consistency of translation is very hard to achieve. And there's no mechanism for readers to tell what is being translated. But each book has a glossary in the back, which indicates how terms are translated in that text.

(Q) All is translated, and nothing is left in the original – does this include Sanskrit words like sutra, dharma, Buddha?

(A) No – and names are left or returned to Sanskrit. And we're hoping to do a comprehensive glossary of terminology, a set of terms and an indication of how they are rendered in each text. We'll probably do this in collaboration with the digital dictionary of Buddhism, which allows sub-entries to say 'this translator used this term with this rendering in this text'.

(Q) For the editorial stage, how are editors chosen?

(A) The Tokyo editorial committee has 4 or 5 scholars, most are Japanese and one is Japanese-American, and they farm out work to scholars who are known authorities on the text in question. I don't know how this is organised or paid for. The editors have been very good.

(Q) Dictionaries – how are they organised?

(A) Volume by volume. As we get things on the web, we now have a process to regularise texts as they go on the web. It's relatively easy for more recent volumes, which are all in PDF. Earlier ones were not compatible with the Numata font, and now we use Times Roman Extended.

(Q) You mentioned you're working on the *Vimalakirti Sutra* – is it complete?

(A) Yes, it's complete. I didn't have access to the Sanskrit text. I decided to render Kumarajiva's translation, and when wondering about how to do singular or plural, commentaries usually helped.

(Q) Do you use monastics?

(A) There are no Chinese monastics involved. There are some Chinese scholars involved. In terms of Japanese Buddhism, the definition of priest in Japan is different from other countries, and many Buddhist scholars – maybe 90% - are from temple families, so they're often priests in the Pure Land or Soto Zen school. Of all Japanese translators, 90% or more are priests.

(Q) What proportion of the Taisho is in the Kangyur/Tengyur?

(A) I don't know. But the Kangyur doesn't contain the Agamas, which comprise much of the Pali canon. The overlaps would be significant, but the two would supplement each other. The Chinese translation enterprise is an older brother to the Tibetan enterprise, and it began in the year 148 of the Common Era, and the first wave of translation continued to around the year 800, just when Tibetan translations are starting. Chinese translation continues thereafter, but the two collections are complementary – the Chinese provides earlier texts.

(A) There's a rough approximation between Taisho and Tengyur, but approximately 74% of the pages of the enlarged Kangyur have a Taisho equivalent, but only 7% of the Tengyur. In total, this makes up about 27% of the combined Kangyur/Tengyur – so lots of texts in both are not shared. The Taisho includes many indigenous Chinese and Japanese texts, so Numata included the East Asian equivalent of the Kangyur, Tengyur and literary works of Tibet.

(Q) What guidelines do you have for the use of Sanskrit texts?

(A) Our policy is we're translating from Chinese, although some texts, e.g. *Lotus Sutra*, clearly refer to the Sanskrit texts.

March 17, Morning – Peter Skilling, Fragile Palm Leaves Foundation (video)

Peter Skilling was unable to attend the conference, but sent a message on video. The transcript of this video follows. Numbers in parentheses refer to references, which appear at the end of the transcript.

Translating the Buddha's Words: Some Notes on the Kanjur Translation Project

This Dhamma that I have attained is profound, hard to see and hard to understand, peaceful and sublime, unattainable by mere reasoning, subtle, to be experienced by the wise.

Shakyamuni the Awakened One (1)

The production of the Tibetan translations that became the *Kanjur* and *Tanjur* was one of the greatest cultural exchanges that the world has ever seen. A "new" language and new conventions were established, and a vast body of knowledge was transferred not only in letter but in spirit to become an enduring monument of culture in all its forms.

The translation project sponsored by the Dharma kings was certainly the greatest planned and sustained cultural exchange in early world history – over one thousand years before UNESCO and other international projects.

This makes the project to translate the *Kanjur* into English a bold revival of ancient ideals, in an entirely new age with new technologies and potentials. But in the end the project will depend on human capacities – on the translators. Translation is not just a matter of words. The translation of the *Kanjur* is a cultural transfer and a spiritual transmission. The goal is communication, which can be achieved through collaboration and consultation.

The *Kanjur* translations were produced by teams of Indian and Tibetan scholars. The Indians brought with them

the vast knowledge and wisdom of the great Indian universities and the insight of their training and practice. Together they prepared translation manuals like the *Sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa (Madhyavyutpatti)* and the *Sgra bye brag tu rtogs par byed pa chen mo (Mahavyutpatti)* – tools which we still depend on today. In their translations they were deeply concerned with the sciences of language, of grammar, and of etymology. They fixed Tibetan equivalents of Sanskrit roots, prefixes, particles, and so on. As a result, a new literary language was created, designed to convey the texts as accurately as possible.

Eventually, the translated texts were arranged and classified into collections, which became the *Kanjurs* we know today. The *Kanjurs* are precious repositories of Indian Buddhist texts, a large number of which no longer survive in Sanskrit. Therefore, the *Kanjur* is part of the cultural and spiritual heritage, not only of Buddhism but also of India and the world.

Kanjurs – I use the plural because the different editions are not entirely identical – are divided into several divisions, and we can study their contents through the catalogues (*dkar chag*) that give titles, sizes, and translators. The first European analysis of the *Kanjur* was published by the great Hungarian pioneer Alexander Csoma de Körös in Calcutta in 1836-1839. Csoma de Körös also translated the *Mahavyutpatti* into English. He was followed by Léon Feer, who published two important works on the *Kanjur* – *Analyse du Kandjour, recueil des livres sacrés du Tibet (Annales du Musée Guimet II, 1881, a translation and augmentation of Csoma de Körös’ work in 446 pages)* and *Fragments extraits du Kandjour (Annales du Musée Guimet V, 1883, 577 pages)*. Feer wrote, “by making known the vast sacred literature of Tibet, Csoma cast light on a part of the history of the human spirit which up to then was unknown.” Feer’s second work was equally important, since it was the first European translation of selected texts and passages of the *Kanjur*.

The divisions of the *Kanjur* include *Tantra*, *Vinaya*, *Prajñāparamita*, *Buddhavatamsaka*, *Ratnakuta*, and *Sutra*. I will leave *Tantra* and *Vinaya* aside, and discuss the other divisions. *Prajñāparamita (Sher phyin)* is long and profound, and contains sixteen titles. Some translations into English have already been made, mainly by Edward Conze, pioneer of “Perfection of Wisdom Studies.” *Buddhavatamsaka (Phal chen)* is also very long (it takes up six volumes of the Peking *Kanjur*), but a complete translation from Shiksananda’s late seventh-century Chinese version has been published by Thomas Cleary (2). The *Ratnakuta (Dkon brtsegs)* is a collection of 49 sutras, some of which have been translated,

especially from the Chinese. (3) Translations from the *Sutra* collection (*Mdo, Mdo sde, Mdo sna tshogs*) – both long and short, Shrivakayana and Mahayana – have been done by individual translators for various purposes, often for academic study. There are 762 sutras in the Peking *Kanjur*; there has been no sustained programme to translate them.

Tibetan tradition does not emphasize the study of individual sutras. Rather it stresses the Indian technical literature (*sastra, bstan bcos*) through Tibetan commentaries illuminated by the living oral tradition. This is different from China and the Far East, where schools of thought and practice grew up around individual Mahayana sutras. As a result, very few Mahayana sutras have been translated into modern languages from within the Tibetan tradition. On the other hand, the publication of writings of the Tibetan masters has increased dramatically in the last decades, and has improved significantly in quality. Many important works of all four main traditions are now accessible.

In a sense the *Kanjur* translation project is turning over a new leaf by going directly to the sutras. We must recognize this fact when we embark on this exciting new twenty-first century project. Inspired by the precedent of the great *mkhan po, pandita, and lotsawa*, we face many challenges.

I would like to present my ideas on this subject in three sections: planning, preparation, and product.

1. PLANNING

Planning means making decisions, and there are many to be made. These are some of them.

Source texts

What edition of the *Kanjur* should be used? At present we have access to several *Kanjurs*.

These may be divided into:

- *Kanjurs* following the *Tshal pa* lineage;
- *Kanjurs* following the *Them spangs ma* lineage;
- Independent or local *Kanjurs*.

An individual sutra is not always the same in the different traditions – there can be significant variations (the translation may be older or newer, revised or unrevised, etc.). That is, *Kanjurs* are not uniform in contents or in textual tradition. The variation begins even with the titles. Here are three examples:

(1) “Questions of Druma, the Kinnara King”

- *Tshal pa mi ’am ci’i rgyal po ljon pas zhus pa*

- *Thems spangs ma mi 'am ci'i rgyal po sdong pos zhus pa*
- (2) “Sutra on Many Elements” / *kham mang po pa'i mdo*
- *Tshal pa* (including Derge) *dhatubahutaka*
 - *Thems spangs ma bahudhatuka*
 - The *Thems spangs ma* tradition gives the correct Sanskrit title. The *Tshal pa* tradition gives a wrong title, presumably invented by the editors of the *Kanjur* at some point.
- (3) “Sutra on the similes of the young ones” / *Gzhon nu dpe'i mdo*
- All *Kanjurs*: *kumaradrstanta-sutra*.
 - The Sanskrit title is wrong in all *Kanjurs*. The correct title, known from Sanskrit texts, is *Daharopama-sutra*.

These examples warn us that we cannot even take the title for granted. Obviously we must be cautious with every word of the text, down to the final colophon.

In general, scholars prefer the Derge xylograph edition, and for several reasons it seems advisable to appoint the Derge as primary source for the *Kanjur* translation project, especially because a new digital edition is under preparation. When that is ready it will be a marvellous tool. However, when the text is difficult it is useful to consult other *Kanjurs*, and in any case, translator(s) should learn as much as possible about the textual history of the sutra(s) they are working on. Other *Kanjurs* may be consulted online through the TBRC, through the meritorious work of Gene Smith. Furthermore, when critical editions of a sutra already exist, the translator(s) should certainly consult them. I wonder whether young scholars can be trained at one of the Tibetan institutes to do preliminary research on each sutra selected for translation – to collect all relevant materials.

Selection of texts for translation

What texts should be chosen to translate? That is a difficult question indeed. The project will not be accomplished overnight, and must be planned in several long-term phases (here we should compare the planning and the principles of selection of the BDK programme). Should sample texts be selected from all divisions of the *Kanjur*? The *Tantras* – about seven hundred in number – are difficult; they require notes and explanations, and in some case initiations. The *Vinaya* (*'dul ba*) texts (eight in number) are long and technical, but they are, of course, foundational for

monasticism, for the sangha. Some sutras are very long – the “Perfection of Wisdom in One Hundred Thousand Stanzas” and the *Buddhavatamsaka*, for example. Beyond that, there are over three hundred sutras in the *Ratnakuta* and *Sutra* divisions. How to make a choice?

The relevance and interest of a sutra should be a determining factor for the first phase. I would suggest a selection of shorter or medium-length sutras, especially ones that are often referred to or cited in Indian and Tibetan *shastras*. At the beginning it will be necessary to establish terminology and technique, so it may be useful to translate a text like the *Arthaviniscaya-paryaya* (*Don rnam par nges pa zhes bya ba'i chos kyi rnam grangs*), which has already been translated by N.H. Samtani along with its commentary (the latter only available in Sanskrit, although a different commentary is preserved in Tibetan). In the same volume one might consider including a *shastra*, a *Tanjur* text, the *Pañcaskandhaka* of Vasubandhu, which is now available in Sanskrit and has several Indian commentaries in the *Tanjur*. These two texts would help establish a firm basis for the translation and understanding of terminology. Once terminology is established, many other translations can proceed smoothly.

Other suggestions:

- “The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines” (*Astahasrika Prajñāparamita, Brgyad stong pa*): There is an English translation from the Sanskrit (Conze) and a recent French translation from the Tibetan.
- “The Kashyapa Chapter” (*Kashyapaparivarta, 'Od srung gi le'u*): Sanskrit available. There is no translation so far from Tibetan or Sanskrit.
- “The Shalistamba Sutra” (*Shalistamba-sutra, Sa lu'i ljang ba*): Sanskrit almost all available in quotation, for example in Candrakīrti's *Prasannapada*. Edition of Tibetan text by Schoening with edition of Kamalashīla's commentary. French translation.
- “One Hundred [Stories about] Karma” (*Karmashataka*): No translation.
- Miscellaneous short texts on the merit of making or worshipping stupas – to include

- *Adbhuta-sutra, Kutagara-sutra, Maharana-sutra, Pratityasamutpada-sutra, Caityapradaksina-gatha, Prasenajit-gatha.*

For all of these texts, considerable research materials are available. The fact that translations already exist – whether from Sanskrit, Chinese, or, more rarely, Tibetan – does not mean we should not include a text. There is bound to be overlap. The *Kanjur* translations will be faithful renderings of the Tibetan versions as understood by the translation teams in eighth and ninth century Tibet. We might describe them as products of the flourishing Indo-Tibetan culture of the age.

We need not hesitate to translate sutras that have already been translated. On the contrary, we can learn from the translations – and furthermore, our goal is to represent the Indo-Tibetan translations of the *Kanjur*. For example, if we plan to translate sutras from the Tibetan that have already been translated from Chinese in the BDK project, our translators can compare to see how the ideas were expressed by the BDK translator. Of course the Chinese and Tibetan versions are often somewhat different, but the comparison is always useful. And if the BDK translator knows Tibetan (perhaps a few do), he or she could be consulted for advice.

Vocabulary and style

To what degree should vocabulary be standardized? This is a big problem. Translators and scholars do not agree even on basic vocabulary – for example, the five aggregates (*phung po lnga, pañcaskandha*). We should be flexible, and leave the translators some leeway. The final rule should be internal consistency. I believe in guidelines, not inflexible rules.

With regard to vocabulary and style, we must consider the audience, the readers. Do we aim to translate for all intelligent beings, or only for those within the Tibetan teaching tradition? I believe the translations should have universal appeal, and for that reason I feel we must avoid trying to reproduce the Tibetan forms too literally. Should we use Sanskrit terms like *arhat* rather than artificial terms like “foe-destroyer”? Should we use the Sanskrit forms of names of persons and places, rather than translate them into English? These are important questions that must be decided carefully. If the translations are too artificial they will have limited appeal.

It will be necessary to draw up a cumulative glossary by looking at existing translations and glossaries, especially from Tibetan. It should give, for example, the English,

French, and German (plus other languages, as far as is possible) equivalents of the terms with their source keyed to a bibliography. Common translations that are widely used could be described as “common.” The glossary can be a basis for shorter glossaries of relevant terms to be published at the end of each translation. Such a preparation is a massive lexicographical project, but it seems to me necessary. Here again, perhaps young research scholars can be trained to do this.

Other questions will be how to deal with repetitions, common especially in longer sutras, and how to treat honorifics and titles. Should we preserve them in translation, or abbreviate and reduce them? My own tendency is to preserve them.

Many of the sutras are in mixed prose and verse. The prose includes narratives, dramatic stories that are often breathtaking in their scope and vision. The verse is poetry, often extremely beautiful, as for example the praises of the Buddha in the “Questions of Rastrapala” (*Rastrapalapariprccha-sutra*) or the “Exposition of Vimalakirti” (*Vimalakirti-nirdesha*). There are lyrical passages on emptiness in for example the “King of Samadhis” (*Samadhiraja*). Can we translate the stories and poems in a way that they retain their beauty, so that they inspire the readers? Let us reflect that Kumarajiva’s translation of the “Lotus Sutra” became a classic of Chinese literature. The Sanskrit Lotus Sutra was translated twice (into French and later into English) in the nineteenth century. Despite the fact that the Sanskrit is available and has been published in many editions, Kumarajiva’s Chinese version has stood its own, and has been translated many times into English, French, and other languages. (The Tibetan has never been translated.) This demonstrates the power of a good translation.

Method

Translators should consult the existing literature on their text – critical editions, translations (including from Sanskrit and Chinese), studies, etc. Sometimes it may be useful to look at Dunhuang manuscript or other early versions. If possible, they should compare the Sanskrit when available. However, we must remember that the Sanskrit will be a different text than the one translated into Tibetan, and not try to confuse the text lineages. The Tibetan should always be the primary text (except where we can identify clear-cut cases of mistranslation).

Translators should be familiar with other translations from Pali, Chinese, etc. A number of classical translations

should be chosen for consultation. Above all, translators should study closely the translations of Étienne Lamotte – the “Heroic March” (*Shuramgama-samadhi*), the “Exposition of Vimalakirti,” in the original French or the English translations. Relatively recent translations include:

Jens Braarvig, *Aksayamati-nirdesha*
Paul Harrison, *Pratyutpannabuddhasamadhi*
Jan Nattier, *The Questions of Ugra*
Daniel Boucher, *The Questions of Rastrapala*

The goal of these translations may be different from our goal, but we can learn a great deal about the questions that arise in translation.

Selection of translator(s)

Who should translate a chosen text? Individuals or groups? This should depend on circumstances. If someone who has seriously worked on a text as a thesis, a study, or a book, agrees to produce a version for the *Kanjur* project, they should be encouraged to join. This is, I believe, the BDK principle. Some sutras have already been fully translated for PhD programmes but have never been published, for example the *Satyakaparivarta* (Losang Jamspal 1993). Can we explore the re-edition and publication of works like this?

Editorial committee/board

There should be a committee to oversee the translations when they are submitted. The committee should be made up of scholars with several fields of expertise, including Sanskrit. Here too we must compare the BDK model.

2. PREPARATION

2.1. Bibliographic survey

As I see it, the first step is to compile a bibliographic survey of existing editions, translations, and studies. The bibliography should follow one of the *Kanjur* catalogues – the best may be the Otani *Kanjur* catalogue, which gives information about Chinese and Derge versions – giving information for each catalogue entry, as available (*A Comparative Analytical Catalogue of the Kanjur Division of the Tibetan Tripitaka*, Kyoto, 1930-32; see online search at <http://web.otani.ac.jp/cgi-bin/peking.cgi>). This must include translations from any language – Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese, Khotanese, Uighur, etc. It is necessary to find out what

theses have been done recently (10-20 years) on sutras from Tibetan and have not been published, and, in some cases, to contact the authors.

The bibliography should cover reference material like *Kanjur* catalogues, dictionaries, indexes, etc. (4). Peter Pfandt’s bibliography (*Mahayana Texts Translated into Western Languages: A Bibliographical Guide*, 1986) is now very much out of date. Some bibliographies must be available on the Internet.

2.2. Courses/Seminars

It is worthwhile to consider holding a number of in-depth courses or seminars during the period of preparation, i.e. in the next few years. Suggested topics include:

2.2.1. History of the Buddhist scriptures and scripture collections.

2.2.2. History of Buddhist translation

2.2.3. History of the *Kanjur*

The courses should be conducted at an institute with a first-class library, for example with several editions of the *Kanjur*.

3. Product

At a relatively early stage the editorial committee should decide on format, general design, standard contents (e.g. whether to have a glossary, how detailed the indexes should be, how to format bibliographies, etc.).

The series name is very important. It should be clear and straightforward. BDK is a bit confused sometimes, when they put more than one text in a single volume. The new series from Columbia is an example of what should not be done:

Loizzo, Joseph John (tr.) (2007). *Nagarjuna’s Reason Sixty with Candrakirti’s Reason Sixty Commentary*. New York: The American Institute of Buddhist Studies at Columbia University in New York/Columbia University’s Center for Buddhist Studies and Tibet House US.

The bibliographical reference is too complicated.

Making these decisions in advance will save a lot of trouble later. Translators should work with the same format and fonts, etc.

A note on other translation projects

BDK

BDK is a religious enterprise, connected to the Pure Land school, with (as far as I know) funding from a single source. The translations are non-sectarian, and in addition to Sutra or “word of the Buddha” include works by Indian, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese authors. We are fortunate that Prof. John McRae is here to explain how BDK works.

Pali canon

Almost all of the Pali canon has been translated, starting in the late 1800s. Some of the ancillary texts and commentaries have been translated. New translations of important texts have been published, such as those by Bhikkhu Bodhi. The translation process never ends - knowledge changes, language changes, and new translations are needed.

Dharma Publishing

Some texts have been published by Dharma Publishing (Berkeley), including the “Fortunate Aeon” and the *Sandhinirmocana-sutra*.

Sanskrit Buddhist texts

In general, very little has been translated. The “Clay Sanskrit Series” – mostly non-Buddhist texts – has published the *Buddhacarita* and the *Saundaranandakavya*, both by the great poet Ashvaghosha, and several *avadanas*. These are exemplary translations. Most recently, Andy Rotman’s *Divine Stories, Divyavadana* (Part I, Boston, Wisdom Publications, 2008) is a landmark in the translation of Buddhist narrative and of Mulasarvastivadin literature.

Other scholarly series to be consulted include the “Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection” (MSC, three volumes published to date) and Gandhari Buddhist Texts (GBT, five volumes to date).

I hope my remarks are useful. Once again, I regret that I cannot be present and I send my wishes for the success of the conference.

Notes

(1) “The Noble Search”, in Ñanamoli Bhikkhu and Bodhi Bhikkhu (tr.), *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya*, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1995, p. 260.

(2) *The Flower Ornament Scripture*, 3 vols., Boston & London, Shambhala, 1985.

(3) Garma C.C. Chang, General Editor, *A Treasury of Mahayana Sutras: Selections from the Maharatnakuta Sutra*, University Park and London, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1983.

(4) See here David Seyfort Ruegg, “Sanskrit-Tibetan and Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionaries and Some Problems in Indo-Tibetan Philosophical Lexicography”, in Boris Oguibénine (ed.), *Lexicography in the Indian and Buddhist Cultural Field*, München, 1998 (Studia Tibetica Band IV).

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March 17, Morning – Message from Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche (letter)

Your Eminence Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, I send you warmest greetings from Boudhanath with the hope that this letter finds you in excellent health and vigorous spirits.

Over the years I have become increasingly aware of the importance of seeing the words of Lord Buddha translated into English. Although the precious Dharma currently exists in Tibetan, Chinese, Sanskrit, Pali, and other Asian languages, it still remains largely inaccessible for anyone who does not have the fortune of studying and mastering these difficult tongues. As such, it is exceedingly difficult for most students of Buddhism around the world to fully enjoy the nectar of Lord Buddha's vast and profound teachings. For this reason I have, on several occasions, encouraged the Dharmachakra Translation Committee to focus its energies towards translation of Kangyur materials. I was therefore especially delighted to learn of the opportunity extended to the Committee to participate in the forthcoming Khyentse Foundation conference and we look forward to contributing to its success in whatever way we can.

While I understand that the conference will not necessarily be concerned with setting deadlines for such a monumental project, I cannot but feel inspired by the prospect of one day having Lord Buddha's words translated into English and other languages in their entirety. Moreover, while this may appear a daunting task, I personally find this project to be extremely urgent. At present we are able benefit from the advice, guidance, and blessings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and other truly learned and accomplished, senior masters from all four schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Their presence among us is indeed a great fortune and yet, as we know, one that cannot be taken for granted indefinitely. It is with this concern in mind that I here write to express our full support for your most noble aspiration.

For some time now I have directed our committee to seriously consider ways in which the Kangyur can be translated in a genuine and efficient manner that does full justice to the sacred nature of the original scriptures. In this regard, the Committee has tentatively projected the resources

and timeframes likely to be needed to complete such a task. Drawing on our experience and calculations, we believe that a team of 35 full-time translators and editors should be able to complete the task within 10 to 15 years. Moreover, in order to make such a project feasible, we envisage that translators from all four schools should participate under the guidance of an advisory committee consisting of senior masters from each of the four schools, and headed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Based on our conversations with other translators around the world, it seems clear that many qualified individuals may not be able to participate in this project by virtue of their being committed to other long-term projects. As such, we anticipate that it may prove a significant challenge to bring together a large and cohesive group of capable translators able to work full-time on this project. Nevertheless, since I consider this project to be one of the most significant and meritorious undertakings in the world today – and one that will be of great importance for ensuring the genuine presence of the Dharma in the future – I would like to offer the Dharmachakra Translation Committee's full support to this noble project.

In practical terms, I propose to direct 15 translators from the Dharmachakra Translation Committee to begin work on the Kangyur project. At present, these translators are engaged in other projects, but each would be able to devote 50% of his/her time to the project immediately. In addition, our organization will be able to train an additional 10 to 15 translators over the next five years through the Rangjung Yeshe Institute's Buddhist Studies program. Accordingly, it is our expectation that within a five-year period the Dharmachakra Translation Committee will be able to commit 15 to 20 full-time and 10 to 15 part-time translators to the project. In this way, we will be in a position to provide 50% of the translators needed to complete the translation of the Kangyur within a 10 to 15 year period.

In order to be successful in this undertaking, we believe that the full backing of the broader Tibetan Buddhist

community and the active involvement of many other skilled translators, editors, supporters, and benefactors from around the world will be needed. In this regard, I would like to stress that the Dharmachakra Translation Committee sees its role in this project simply as contributors and participants in a vast shared project involving all schools and traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. We believe that it is only through working together that such a profound project can be fully realized.

I hope that this commitment of support will prove useful during your preparations for the conference at the Deer Park Institute. I also hope that you do not find our plan to see the Kangyur translated within a 10 to 15 year period wholly unrealistic. Naturally, many causes and conditions would need to come together for the project to be realized, but given

that this has been the constant aspiration of so many great masters, we cannot help but feel drawn to this project and exhilarated by the prospect of seeing this precious collection translated within our lifetime.

I realize that your distinguished gathering of renowned translators will be eminently qualified to take these matters forward, and I wish your historic meeting every possible success. Finally, let me conclude by expressing my sincere delight and appreciation for your vision in planning the conference and for all your vast and profound dharma activities that continue to benefit the teachings and all sentient beings – far and wide.

[Letter dated 11 March 2009]

March 17, Morning – Completing the 100-Year Vision

The group revisited yesterday’s draft vision statements, which were combined together into a single draft statement: “To translate and make (universally) accessible the (Indo-Tibetan) Buddhist literary heritage (for study and practice).” Points of consensus that emerged during the discussion were that “universally” was redundant, “Indo-Tibetan” was unnecessarily restrictive, and “for study and practice” might be seen as potentially missionary. There was a strong preference for a short statement, with additional comments added in notes or unpacking. The group reached agreement on the following vision statement:

To translate and make universally accessible the Buddhist literary heritage

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) Regarding this 100-year vision statement, the question has been asked and not properly answered: “Who is this for? Whose vision is this?” I still don’t have a good answer, but I think it’s better than yesterday. What Khyentse Foundation and other aspiring supporters want to do is facilitate and support the work of this group, and be the servant, fund-raiser and lobbyist – but we need to know what you want and what the lineage holders want. If we don’t have that, what do we tell people? What do you want in 100 years, 25 years, and 5 years? If we have a list blessed by lineage holders, translators and students, then we have something concrete to show to people, and we can say, “within 5 years we’ll translate this, please help.” Some of you Rinpoches or translators may already have projects planned, funded or started, and this makes us even more than happy, as we are even closer to our 100-year goal. Neither Khyentse Foundation nor any other foundation should ever dictate the vision or the mission of this group – there’s no

agenda like that. I’m sure you know this. But it’s necessary to have a short and long-term vision for the business plan, so to speak, and that’s why Ivy is here. I feel we’ve done quite well. Perhaps some of you think this isn’t so relevant to you, as you won’t be here in 100 years, but if we develop goals for 25 and 5 years, it’ll give us some kind of direction.

(Q) It’s hard to have a 5-year goal unless we understand how much of a facilitating role Khyentse Foundation is prepared to play.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) This is a catch-22. For a good example, look at the structure of the buildings here at Deer Park. The monastery faces one way, this building faces another way, K block is crooked – all this happened because we didn’t have a big vision. As refugees when we have a little money, we get excited and say, “Let’s put the building this way.” Then we go somewhere, get a little money, and then add another floor and eventually this is the product – everything is crooked. This is the poverty mentality we have.

Every time people ask about the vision, we dare not look at a big vision as the question of money always comes up. But as Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche said, John F. Kennedy didn't know how he was going to attain his vision when he declared

The group then started to discuss how the 100-year vision might be translated into a 25-year goal in preparation for the afternoon session to define the 25-year goal.

(Q) How do we know we're going towards our vision? What's one big step? If we listen to the Dharmachakra translation committee, we should have both the Kangyur and Tengyur translated within 25 years.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) Actually I have to say something. Yesterday, both Rinpoches said I dragged them here, and it's true in a way, for one reason. I'm telling them, if you guys aren't involved now, someone will translate all this and some translations may be good – of course that would be excellent. But if they're not good and keep on translating and publishing, we'll have a bad job published and distributed everywhere, and then can't complain, as it will be too late. So it's better to be involved now. And so I'm planning to drag more lamas into this. In terms of the 25-year plan, I have nothing concrete in mind. I also said yesterday in my speech, if you were to ask me what's the priority, I'm traditionally and culturally and morally forced to say sutras then Indian shastras then Tibetan commentaries. But I also know you have to face reality. You may think I'm a Gemini and have a double face, but if you ask me "what's your 25 year plan," I would say – and please forgive my mathematics – 8 volumes of Kangyur, 16 volumes of Indian Tengyur, and 32 volumes of Tibetan commentary – I think that's realistic. You may think I'm contradicting what I said earlier, but I said we should plant the seed, not that we should drop everything else and only do Kangyur.

(Q) The translation of Kangyur could be possible for me. I'm not looking forward to working on the Kangyur. But as a Vajrayana student, as many of us are, many of us have been taught that the guru is more kind than the Buddha. We follow the instructions of our teachers, and they are example of what we hope to achieve, so we translate their words and the texts they have studied. That's why we've done what we have done. When our gurus teach the sutras we'll translate them.

(Q) To avoid building things block-by-block and chaotically, and defining a 25-year plan that will be like that, we first need to agree on the target for 100 years. Then we can define the full brief for 25 years and then have a path for each 25 years.

it. I'm sure it's good to have a goal and then work towards it. And if we can't get there, then we can just postpone the date a little bit. But a goal gives direction, and it'll help so our work won't be crooked like this.

(A) But I thought the 100-year goal has already been decided – in 100 years it's everything.

(Q) But "everything" is 10,000 volumes.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) It's a catch-22. Are you worried about money?

(Q) You won't reach 10,000 volumes

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) Maybe in 10 years we'll be better equipped, so when we meet here in 25 years we'll have more translators and so I might say we can accomplish 80 volumes rather than 8. I'm really hoping that no bomb from Pakistan hits us here – as some of the greatest translators are gathered here.

(Q) HH the Dalai Lama emphasises that the Tibetan tradition inherits the foundations of the 17 Nalanda panditas. So whether it's in a 5-year or 25-year plan, let's complete the translation of the works of the 17 Nalanda panditas.

(Q) In 25 years it'll hopefully be possible to train a large number of translators, and it's not inconceivable that we could train 25 or 30 more each year. Then over 10 years, we'd have 300 new translators, and then they can do magnificent things. If we think of our own limited time it's difficult, but if we train people, in 7-8 years it'll pay off and in 15 years it'll be immense.

(Q) I can't think of a 25-year goal or 100-year goal without a 5-year goal. In 5 years, this group could design the project, raise funds, set up a website with appropriate metadata, and agree how many texts will be translated. That may be useful as a target, but part of our 5-year goal should be to assess progress and then decide the appropriate 25-year target at that point.

(Q) It's like putting a man on the moon. There's something magical about a clear goal – there's something magical about translating the entire Kangyur – and it's good to magnetise resources and people.

(Q) The 25-year goal is still a 'BHAG', and we will get to a detailed 5-year plan beneath it.

(Q) Rinpoche's numbers are conservative – and we don't have much time – so let's have something large as a goal, and then move to the nuts and bolts of what we want to do in

5 years. Let's say half of the Kangyur and the works of the 17 Nalanda panditas.

(Q) What kinds of goals are we talking about? Here are some possible dimensions of a goal: (1) Numbers/names of texts, (2) training translators (3) establishing a sturdy organisation that can perpetuate itself for 100 years, (4) funding, (5) tools for translators, (6) means for distribution and publication. We need to establish these things that can perpetuate beyond our lifetimes. And so the goal cannot be just about the number of texts.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) The Tibetans have a big problem, as for them the lama is in the centre and the Buddha is on the side. Even when lamas give transmissions, they give mantras and bodhisattvas but not the Buddha. But who would be a bodhisattva if not for the Buddha? And everyone appreciates their teacher, but we all follow the Buddha. Without Buddha, there would be no Buddhism today. I believe there's always passion to translate the teachings, but I think we need to focus on Buddha's words first, then the shastras by panditas. So it's important to do Buddha's words first.

(Q) "Universally accessible" to whom? It might help define how much Kangyur we should translate. Most sutras don't have commentaries, but tantras have explanatory commentaries that are often within the Kangyur. But that's still not enough for accessibility, so we'd have to go to the commentaries in Tengyur as well. So to do Kangyur first, perhaps we should think about what makes a genre

accessible, and thus decide how much Kangyur/Tengyur we need to translate?

(Q) Let's look at what's already translated, and the references there to Kangyur and Tengyur. Up to now, what's translated is useful for practitioners. Why can't we build from that foundation? So when people see there's a quote from Vimalakirti, wouldn't it be nice to have a translation of the *Vimalakirti Sutra* they could read?

(Q) The Kangyur is conceptually more important, but such translations benefit from reference to the Tengyur, so it would be good to translate both in parallel. There are 140,000 folios in the Tengyur, and half that in the Kangyur, and 10 people working full time could do this in 30 years. We can potentially translate everything in 25 years.

(Q) We also need tools for translators – also tools for readers like glossaries, indices, etc.

(Q) Sutra commentaries are more difficult than sutras. They don't make sutras easier to read.

(Q) Maybe we should pick a "greatest hits" list for 25 years, including tools and editorial review.

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) I think now when we talk about the Kangyur everyone seems to freak out. Although nobody has seen it, we're all afraid of it already – we already have a negative view about how difficult it is, etc. It's almost as if the Kangyur is Egyptian or something, a dead language that nobody knows. It's not that bad! I haven't read much Kangyur, but what I've read wasn't as difficult as I thought. Maybe there are difficult parts I haven't read yet. But before we talk about how difficult it is – let's go with the great vision of Rinpoche and all of us.

March 17, Afternoon – Developing the 25-Year Goal

(Ivy) We want a clear and compelling 25-year goal that moves us towards our vision. Some examples of 25-year goals include:

- Merck: "become the pre-eminent drug maker in the world" – there's no quantity yet in this goal, it's still big and inspiring, but it's still possible in our lifetimes.
- John F. Kennedy "put a man on the moon by 1969"

A possible 25-year goal for our conference, based on our 100-year vision, might be:

- To translate and make accessible a substantial portion of the Buddhist literary heritage with permanent infrastructure and funding in place for the next 75 years

(Q) The word "permanent" contradicts 75 years. We should delete it.

(Q) I'd like to make another pitch for the Kangyur. There's a mistaken impression that if we commit to the Kangyur then everything else will screech to a halt – no! Translation of the Tengyur will continue as Robert Thurman and Tom Yarnall at Columbia have taken on that task. But nobody has taken on the Kangyur, and I'd recommend that we do so.

(Q) Our vision for 25 years should be concrete – e.g. if you're a young translator, reading that we plan to complete a "substantial portion" is too abstract. And saying that "infrastructure will be in place in 25 years" is not a solid basis for you to commit to a career as a translator now in the hope that there will be infrastructure there in 25 years! So let's plan to get the funding and infrastructure in place in the next 5 years.

(Q) What about including "translating and training" infrastructure?

The group then split into four sub-groups to draft possible statements of a 25-year goal, which were then reported back to the plenary:

- (1) To translate and make accessible all of the Kangyur and many volumes of the Tengyur and commentaries
- (2) To translate and make accessible one quarter of the Tibetan Buddhist canon
- (3) To translate half of the Kangyur and Tengyur including the works of the 17 masters from Nalanda as well as the core *gsung 'bum* of the major lineages together with the relevant commentaries. In addition we would train a substantial number of translators and prepare a compendium of terms
- (4) Two major goals: (1) an international community of translators who have the tools they need in their own language to translate any genre they wish to translate. This includes the structure to train and maintain the number of translators needed. (2) The entire Kangyur

Group #4 – we came to the conclusion that we should complete the entire Kangyur as we feel that such a magnificent goal will actually energise other projects, and not take away resources from the translation of the 17 masters and *gsung 'bum*, etc. We feel that once we have a galvanising project and infrastructure in place, it'll help other translation work.

(Q) We should also have a compendium as part of our goal, in less than 25 years, and also training translators – but do we want language in this statement that implicitly encompasses all that, or should we just state the most important objective explicitly?

(Ivy) The latter – for 5-year goals, we'll need to get into a lot of explicit detail.

(Q) I'd echo idea of translating the Kangyur. Why don't we say we will translate the entire Kangyur and a significant portion of commentarial literature?

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) We need a concrete goal, e.g. as Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche said this morning at least 8 volumes of Kangyur, 16 of Tengyur and 32 of the Tibetan commentarial texts. And we don't need to worry about Tibetan texts, as there are already many devoted and passionate people working on them. But we need a concrete 25-year goal. And maybe it should be something conservative.

(Q) There's a historical argument for inclusion of the Tengyur. If you take the combined Kangyur and Tengyur, 44% was translated in the early period. Of that, for every 100 pages of sutra that were translated, 80 pages of sutra shastra were translated, and so the Indian form of Buddhism transmitted to Tibet in the early period was sutras and treatises simultaneously. It's the Indian tradition, not something created by Tibet. Also 97.5% of all sutras were translated in the earlier period, and almost none in the later period, when they almost entirely did sutra shastras.

(Q) We need to include tools, as they can't be separated from translating texts: dictionaries, etc. are an integral part of the work.

(Q) You can't make a historical argument based on what's included in the canons; as for example the Chinese canon includes multiple translations. And the Tengyur already has a dedicated group working on it, so let's not duplicate visions. And if we want to do the Kangyur, we'll have to reference the Tengyur extensively – we need to read and consult the commentaries and bring their knowledge to bear, but that doesn't mean we need to produce finished products of all those other texts as well. That's a huge additional effort.

(Q) Our goal is to complete one quarter in 25 years, so we can complete it all in 100 years. And we don't want to rush to make poor quality translations. All of us have opened translations that seem odd and don't make sense, and we realise that it's simply a bad translation. This is even true of my own translations from 15 years ago! So let's not rush to do all the Kangyur. It's a noble goal, but it could put pressure on us to produce, and we might then need to redo texts. I don't want to have to redo things. And I see no conflict with Tengyur translation. We can imagine ourselves as a granting agency, and maybe one institutional grant goes to Columbia

for Tengyur translations. There's no need for a sense of conflict, but let's rather create a big umbrella under which we're all included.

(Q) One mindset I find helpful is to under-promise and over-deliver. As a group we want to be in that position. Let's over-deliver on our promises.

(Q) What about quality? In any one of these 4 statements, we should say that translations should meet a certain quality standard, e.g. that they should be critically edited and peer-reviewed. Critical editions would be very helpful.

(Q) Could we include both the Kangyur and Tengyur as 25-year goals, and then everyone could be happy, rather than think we're subcontracting something and integrating it back in, as then our goals will diverge.

(Q) It's important to say, "High quality, peer reviewed, line edited." That's my presumption if you're going to translate, period.

(Q) If we set a stretch goal we need to add the qualifier about quality.

(Q) The same issues exist for a single text/translator. We need quality control even in a 5-year plan. Maybe then we might find we can't finish in 25 years, but we don't want to relinquish quality control.

(Q) If we're fund-raising, it could undermine future donations if we don't deliver on what we said we would.

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) Quality control is important, but the first generation of translations won't be perfect. They will need refining and editing. Like in Tibet, subsequent generations will improve upon earlier work, just like science works in the West.

(Q) Group #1 discussed the importance of a vision that will excite people. We may not meet our goals given interdependent causes and conditions like funding, but one way to get more funding and improve quality is to try to establish a goal that excites. So saying we'll complete "all the Kangyur" will get people's courage up. It's like Obama. If we had a goal for electing a black president 25 years ago, who would have thought it possible?

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) To have a goal is important. I'm a lazy person. I've been working 40 years, and I've noticed when we have a deadline, things come much faster. Otherwise things can stay there and never get done, but if we have an inspiring goal they are completed. Also my experience with fund-raisers is that if we've done even a quarter of the job, they get inspired and want to continue. They never say, "You didn't do what you said you'd do." If there are problems, people agree to continue. So I think we should have a goal and try our best.

(Q) Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche is asking us to have a global vision of transforming everything in 100 years, and we've talked a little about this or that group doing things so we don't need to worry. But if we said we'd do the Kangyur in 25 years, it's as if we're setting ourselves up as a group to translate Kangyur and leaving the rest of Buddhist translation open to other organisations or translators. So in the 25-year goal it's important to include the idea of encompassing all of what's being done in translation. It's a bit dodgy, as we don't yet have a majority of translators on board, but it seems to be an important criterion in defining our goals. If that's not clear, we'll go in the wrong direction.

(Q) I like Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche's remarks, but my argument is that we should excite people with the 100-year goal. If the grant-makers won't be dismayed if we fall short, then it's fine. But if some will be dismayed, then we should step back from an over-ambitious goal.

(Q) I hear us talk about "duplication" with Columbia, etc., but stating a goal doesn't mean it becomes "our" exclusive territory. It just means that this group really wants to see it translated. If others are inspired to translate, we'll be very happy that part will be done. And for funding, if we talk to funders, even 25 years is too long. So we need to say in 5 or 10 years we'll do this. 25 years is a landmark, but for corporate funders we need to say what we'll do in 5 years.

(Q) Our intention at Columbia is to collaborate with Khyentse Foundation to see it's all done. It's not about territory. If someone else does the work of translating the Tengyur, we're happy. Our mission statement, our aim is to see it gets done, not to do it ourselves.

(Q) Let's go for the big goal, #1, and modify all the details in the 5-year goal.

(Q) We need to be clear what we're doing by setting goals – who are the goals for? Is it for us, an undefined group? Are we claiming that we can create some organisation to supervise, organise and fund the entire translation of Tibetan Buddhism? Or are we creating a separate group?

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) This is the third time this question has come up. It's a very good question. I'm still working on the answer – that's all I can say. But there's urgency. Lamas and scholars are getting old, panditas are disappearing, and we have to do it soon. Someone has to say we'll try to fund raise. I'm sure others will follow. But to do that, given the style or nature of the way things are done in the modern world, you need some sort of goal. I know there's no specific group of translators that has this vision at the moment. Actually I'm a little against that. I had a wild idea. When this was beginning, I was thinking of asking all

the lamas to tell their students to translate a page of Kangyur – to study dharma and Tibetan, and then send their work to the next level of students and these could send it to the next level. I think this too wild, but all translators must tell fundraisers “this is what we want in 5 years.” It’s unfortunate we don’t have a specific group. But those of you in this room represent a lot of translators. And if with the blessings of the gurus we decide on a few books, then Khyentse Foundation and others can go ahead and plan, and once we have funds, then we have to decide the next level of who is doing what.

(Q) 130 translators met in Boulder in September 2008 with about 20 Tibetan teachers. A few were elderly and many were in earlier phases of their career, and there was a strong sense of community and wish to create a form that might express that sense of community and lead to a tangible result. And since then, we (Jessie and Jules at Light of Berotsana) have tried to keep the momentum going, and suggested the creation of a guild that’s easy to join, international, comprehensive in form and scope, begins simply without an agenda and becomes whatever the group would like it to be, without centrality. I don’t know if this is helpful, but perhaps it makes sense to think of a large group – all of them and us. If the international community of translators were to take this on as our responsibility and devise mechanisms to bring it about in cooperation with what exists and what needs to exist, perhaps we could develop a practical answer to ownership without territorial fights.

(Q) There are questions of community and ownership. The consensus is that we want everyone to work together and not step on each other’s toes, but as Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche said, when one works with a group, it’s very important to give up a sense of ownership of what you do. That’s hard with translations that you work on for a long time. But if you come with a strong sense of ownership, it doesn’t work. And intellectual property is important to create translations and be able to improve on them. A group effort shouldn’t be one’s personal thing, but almost done in the spirit of an offering.

Before breaking for afternoon tea, the group voted on the four draft statements of the 25-year goal, and there was near-unanimity in choosing goal #1. So the 25-year goal is:

To translate and make accessible all of the Kangyur and many volumes of the Tengyur and commentaries

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) There’s no reason why a translator’s guild won’t work. And Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche has offered time and space, and we’re happy to support him. And Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche had the initiative to translate the Kangyur, and as Orgyen Tobgyal Rinpoche said this morning, I have nothing to do with translation. If one Rinpoche appears tomorrow to say “I’ll do the Kangyur, give it to me,” that’s fine. If three Rinpoches say, “we’ll do sutras, you do abhidharma,” that’s also fine. We’ll try to facilitate that.

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) Improving on translations isn’t about giving up copyright, and you should have royalties. Rather, it’s about opening it up for when you’re not around in future. While you’re around you can talk to translators, etc. yourself, but when you’re not around, you give the opportunity to future generations to improve your translation. It’s not about giving up any intellectual property, rights, royalties or anything. And as Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche said, we’re just bringing this concept of the importance of translating the Kangyur to the group. But there’s no hidden agenda – it’s just a concept. We’re happy if anyone is willing to translate individually or as a translation group.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) As we’re all here, with trust that this work is important and we can hear with such joy that such a thing could happen, we’ll join for fundraising and working together. Most of us here are professors and we seek your guidance. And we have students from Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, Rigpa, and Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche, and I’m sure they will all join together. We have a tradition of translating as individuals, but for example Rigpa has many potential translators, so manpower won’t be a problem. And with fundraising, there won’t be a problem. The main thing is inspiration. Everyone wants to get it done, and I think a lot can be done in 25 years. Under the guidance of the Rinpoches and other great teachers who send their letters and blessings, I’m sure you’ll all support this.

March 17, Afternoon – Developing the 5-Year Goal

(Ivy) We have agreed our 100-year and 25-year goals. Now we need a 5-year goal. What needs to happen in 5 years to get to our 25-year goal?

(Q) One element needs to be putting in place a clear editorial policy. To translate the Kangyur you need to be clear about what you're translating.

(Q) There seem to me to be too many unclear issues right now to be ready to get to a 5-year goal.

(Ivy) We're still going for the 'What' not the 'How' – once you have the 'What', you can get to the 'How' and the top 5 things you need to do.

(Q) If we talk about the Kangyur, there's a good critical edition in Beijing, in which all the editions are compared.

(Q) That's a compilation rather than a critical edition. It's basically the Derge with footnotes.

(Q) I found the 25-year exercise helpful even though I felt unprepared, as in the ensuing discussion we then had something to focus on. Like a debate, you take a position and then try to defend and attack it, and then you discover something along the way. Let's just get in groups and try and then debate it out afterwards.

(Q) Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche asked me during the break – where did you go? How come all these people who were against the Kangyur disappeared? I think I know many of the problems we'll face in doing it. But at some point we need to put rubber on the road and think about what's really involved in doing this. That's why I originally objected to Kangyur, but I don't mind doing the Kangyur as long as we can deal with those issues.

(Q) You're right, but that needs months of full time work with a group – so we won't be any wiser tomorrow! Let's put a goal to clarify in 5 years, something that's realistic. It's an immense job to develop editorial policies, and it's not necessarily our job to do that here. But let's define the key issues that need to be solved.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) When will the 5-year goal start? Today or in 5 years or 10 years? Perhaps it's premature, but we have to start somewhere.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) I think it should be March 17th 4:30pm today – stating today, and the preparation should be included with these 5 years, otherwise what's the point in having a conference? We're starting from a blank page. We have nothing, not even one cent in our pockets, and nothing on paper.

(Q) I agree that we need to discuss some general questions before we talk about a 5-year plan.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) We'll have to do it, so we might as well plan. I can live with starting tomorrow morning!

(Q) Here's a straw man – to translate and make accessible one fifth of the Kangyur.

(Q) Maybe we shouldn't talk about numbers but rather about concrete problems we have to solve – like which edition of Kangyur are we talking about? How to set up a review committee? What will the structure be?

(Q) Let's put out a number, and then say, "What do we need in order to do that"? The number of texts is a goal, and the rest is all how to do it – tools, review processes, deciding which edition to use and so on – but all this is subsidiary to the goal.

(Q) I'd suggest less than one fifth, as our productivity will increase as time goes on.

(Q) At least let's have the necessary organisational structures and funding and have significant progress on texts.

(Q) I'd propose the following 5 year goal: to put in place a funding structure, editorial policy, business model and staff and translate 10% of the Kangyur, Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries.

(Q) The volumes vary in size, so let's talk in terms of the percentage of total pages as the most meaningful metric – 10% is about 7000 sides of the Kangyur.

(Q) I don't know how much progress has already been made on funding. It will take time. But in 5 years we need to be realistic – maybe should do 2 or 3 examples of each kind of literature, e.g. 2 or 3 texts from abhidharma, 2 or 3 sutras, etc. to check we have working systems in place.

(Q) Shouldn't we do the Tengyur texts related to the 10% of the Kangyur we're doing? I.e.:

To establish the necessary operational infrastructure (editorial policy, business model and staff) and resources (human and financial) and to have translated a representative sample of the Kangyur, Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries

(Q) Translator training is an important focus of the effort, especially at the start.

(Q) An analysis of Tengyur treatises on Kangyur sutras shows that only about 10% of the sutras have commentaries,

so it's unrealistic to limit the Tengyur to commentaries on sutras.

(Q) By end of 5 years we should have seen some texts go through the entire process – from translator blank page to editorial. We should have tested the whole infrastructure.

(Q) “By March 18, 2014, put in place and tested the necessary infrastructure and support ...”

(Q) What about a structure to identify the translators who will actually do this – how will that work?

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) When you try to sell something, it's not that sellable when you say I'm going to sell you something that's about to happen. It would be good even if you say 3% will be done. Anyway, Canglioli and I were talking with Khyentse Foundation, which is pledging to sponsor the translation of the *8,000 Verses of Prajñāparamita*.

(Q) That's 1% right there (0.9% to be precise). It's one volume out of 100.

(Q) We can pick the texts we want to translate, so we should convert the bullet point of “representative texts” into a list of the 25 (or whatever) texts.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) Good!

(Q) I'd like to propose a revised wording: “To have translated a representative sample of the Kangyur, Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries, and to establish the infrastructure and resources necessary to realise the long-term vision.”

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) Rinpoche has asked me to pledge something, and I will pledge to translate all the *Prajñāparamita* sutras in 5 years. We will find translators, and of course we will need the support of all the great scholars.

(Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltzen) Tsechen Kunchab Ling would like to pledge to translate the *25,000 Verses of Prajñāparamita (Niyitri)*.

(Q) Based on what the Rinpoches have offered, let's specify the representative sample.

(Q) We need infrastructure first, so maybe better to put it first in our 5-year vision: “To establish the infrastructure and resources necessary to realise the long-term vision, and to translate a representative sample of the Kangyur, Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries.”

(Q) But “the long term vision” is currently a separate external reference, so let's include it: “To establish the infrastructure and resources necessary to translate the Kangyur, Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries and to publish a representative sample of these texts”.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) You're all eager with words – that's a good sign!

(Q) We're missing the idea of “make universally accessible” from the long-term vision – let's have the same vision, not something different. We should be consistent.

(Ivy) The 5-year goal doesn't have to sound exactly the same as 100-year goal; it's just a step.

(Q) Since we're establishing the structure and funding for the whole project, can't we have the whole vision? Instead of Kangyur, Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries, etc. – can we put that in the 100-year vision? Whereas if we say “Buddhist heritage” that's much bigger opportunity to get funding, support, etc.

The group proposed three alternative wordings for the 5-year goal:

- To translate and publish a representative sample of the Kangyur, Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries and to establish the infrastructure and resources necessary to accomplish the long-term vision
- To establish the infrastructure and resources necessary to translate the Kangyur, Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries and to publish a representative sample of these translated texts
- To establish the infrastructure and resources necessary to translate the Buddhist literary heritage and to publish a representative sample of the translated Kangyur, Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries

(Q) For marketing, let's say “Buddhist canon” rather than “texts from the Kangyur, Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries” – and we can detail the texts.

(Ivy) Let's vote on the substance – then we can finalise the language and wordsmith later.

The group voted, and selected the first alternative as the 5-year goal:

To translate and publish a representative sample of the Kangyur, Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries and to establish the infrastructure and resources necessary to accomplish the long-term vision

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) I'd like to thank you for all the pledges and for your contribution today – it's a wonderful beginning. We have 100, 25 and 5-year visions.

Pledges for 5-year program:

- Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche: Khyentse Foundation will sponsor funding for translation of the *8,000 Verse Prajñāparamita Sutra*

- On behalf of Kangyur Rinpoche's foundation, Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche pledges to translate the entire *Prajñāparamita* – not only the sutras but also the shastras (related commentaries)
- Tsechen Kunchab Ling will translate the *25,000 Verses of Prajñāparamita (Niyitri)*

(Q) The pledges that have been made comprise 22% of the Kangyur and 9% of the Tengyur.

March 18, Morning – Robert Thurman, Tibet House / Columbia University

I want to thank Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche very much for organising this. I was so much looking forward to coming here that I organised my yearly trip to Bhutan around this conference. I apologise for coming late, as His Majesty the King of Bhutan asked me to stay on a couple of days. Kings are important, fund-raising is important, but this translation of the Kangyur and Tengyur and Nyingma Gyubum is more important. Kings will rise and fall but we must keep Buddha's words alive.

I've been teaching since 1972, and when I got my PhD from Columbia my teacher Geshe Wangyal floored me by saying "Now you have your PhD, you must translate the whole Tengyur, not just teach". He said "don't trust those professors, they will not be reliable". Then he demanded to know why I hadn't learned Russian, as he said that when I'm an old man I would have to teach dharma in Russian or else my work wouldn't be finished and I wouldn't be happy.

I'd just come back from India to work on my dissertation with HH the Dalai Lama, and he said I had to translate the *gsung 'bum* of Je Yabse Sum, and my teacher said, "Yes you can do that too." You can't understand lamas without the Tengyur, and you can't have the Tengyur without the Kangyur. And some of us have academic jobs as well, and many do not, and their livelihood is difficult and important and I'm grateful you're thinking about it.

First, I want to congratulate you on the conference logo. I like the way the parrots are tilted a little, so one is higher than the other. Lotsawas are called the "eyes of the world" – why is this? Because Tibetan people who translated felt they were looking with one of their two heads into a higher culture than their own, not arrogantly in the way that modern people look at other cultures as if into a weird antiquarian thing done by people who didn't have a Cadillac or Mercedes Benz. Tibetans realised they were the backward people and

Indians were the higher people, so they were looking to a higher culture and translating into their own lower culture in order to bring their lower culture up. It's a bit like Americans nowadays: a bunch of nasty militarists beating people up! So part of lotsawa training should include cultural training and a critique of self so that translators are able to embrace and reflect critically on the barbarity and destructiveness of modern culture.

In Bhutan I said it's a relief to the planet that our ridiculous economy is collapsing – everyone says "we're so rich and great" and everyone is saying, "yes we're destroying the planet – how can we stop that?" The economic collapse and demonstration of its falseness is fortunate for the planet and for us as translators, as we may now have some hope of being seen to be doing something of high priority for our nation and culture, not something useless and marginal. Even lamas have said "let translators take care of themselves; we have more temples to build". This relates to their admiration of modern thinking, where they think it's so great, and "we need more monasteries." I'm not against monasteries. Indeed, HH the Dalai Lama says that among ex-monks I'm the most enthusiastic about monasticism.

And out of the 352 sutras in Kangyur, Paul Hackett informed me that 121 have been completed, and 28 partially so, but the quality isn't high enough. When I was in Japan in 1980s, Professor Kagiyama, who translated the 8,000 into modern Japanese, said to me one night after some sake, "you have to translate the 8,000". He said about what has been done, "that's not translation." And I agree that it does need to be redone. Also under the sponsorship of C.T. Shen of the Institute of Advanced Studies of World Religion, a team of us translated 43 of the 46 Ratnakuta Sutras from 1973-1976, all of them except the ones on rebirth.

In light of your wonderful talk, Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, we should overcome the dichotomy between scholar translators and practitioner translators. Lotsawas should be trained to realise that the translation process is about elevating culture; so all scholars have to be practitioners. When I came to tenure, some people wrote to the university administration saying don't give him tenure, as he likes Buddhism – that's not good, not academic – you can't like what you study. But it's OK for we Christians, Jews and secularists to do it, because we don't like it.

In the group's discussion, there have been some worries about Kangyur vs. Tengyur – you can't do them without doing both of them together in some way. I was ordered to do Tengyur, and did several chapters of tantra but can't do without some of the root texts. And you mentioned concerns that some Dharma-rajases will tell people to follow just one pattern – you shouldn't worry. It'll take half a century to get a list of terminology, and then people won't all follow it. Terminology is big problem for translators. In abhidharma, the reason that *tsorwa* and *duché* are separated out as two of the five aggregates is because laypeople are obsessed with *tsorwa* and monks are obsessed with opinions and terminology. And translators are like monks: we get totally stuck on terminology! Forget about it – there's no such thing as “the right word.” Tibetans were lucky, as they could make up words to carry the Sanskrit meaning. But in English we're more like Chinese, where the language already has lots of connotations. So we'll change English as we translate dharma into English. We have to take the responsibility that we're making new conventions – people might say we can't use words like “holy” as it belongs to Jesus, we can't use “relativity” as it belongs to Einstein, and we can't use “evolution” as it belongs to Darwin. But in future versions of the Oxford English Dictionary we'll have Buddhist definitions too. For example, karma is a biological theory of life, not something mystical, so we should use scientific language when we talk about it.

Fund raising is very difficult. I'd like to tell you a story about Harrison Ford. I had dinner with him when he was making his last movie, and he said, “now people know I'm interested in Tibet, I get so many proposals, there's no end.” And he said, “you know, everyone says that only what they are doing is any good, and whatever anyone else does is no good.” And I said, “People get to scarcity mentality, I'm

sorry.” He said “Yes, and if you already gave something to someone else's project, they tell you you're wasting your money”. He was turned off by it, and his major efforts moved elsewhere. There's a prophecy of the Buddha that the sangha would be ruined as monks would go out fundraising and would be like dogs fighting over a bone. This July I have three PhD's graduating who are also practitioners, and we'll have a terrible time in the US now as academic job possibilities are drying up. It's hard to get Buddhist studies funding, and it'll become worse. They'll need alternative livelihoods. The timing of this conference is ideal. I'll need a hundred thousand for a year to keep these young people alive and not working in a restaurant – that might be good for their karma, but not for transmission of dharma.

My teacher Geshe Wangyal also ordered me that “once you translate them you have to publish them yourself, not with any press that takes the money and leaves you having to find more money for translators.” I have approached various dharma presses over 35 years, and said “you have to promise me proceeds for this book will go to a revolving fund for the next translators.” None would agree, and even though they are nonprofit and dharma publishers, they're making money for other purposes. So whatever you do, please base this work on a revolving fund so it replenishes itself.

If the sales of the Kangyur were to go towards funding the building of more monasteries or 1000-foot statues, it would not be good. It has to fund more teaching. And it shouldn't be only English. Chinese also have the Kangyur, most of it. But they only have a few hundred pages of the Tengyur. I always scolded them in China and Japan, “you people workshop Shenzong who crossed the desert to obtain sutras, and you could go to Delhi and keep translating, but you don't. You think your canon is fixed.” Chinese dharma really needs to have it.

I was at a Columbia talk on Buddhism and science, and the chair said to me, “don't offend anyone,” and afterwards he said “I asked you before your talk not to offend anyone, but now I'm glad you offended everyone”.

(Q) None of the revenues from Wisdom Publications go to support the construction of Lama Zopa's 500-foot Buddha. And if we have extra money, we pay advances to books that might not otherwise get created. Many books don't make money – and the proceeds from those that do make money go to support the rest.

March 18, Morning – Doboomb Tulku Rinpoche

I'm not a professional speaker. I'd like to start by saying I'm grateful to Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche. I'm glad people remember our conference even if it was a long time ago and nothing significant happened. We organised a small follow-up workshop on terminology in Delhi; Alex Berzin was the resource person (the proceedings are available at www.berzinarchives.com/web/en/archives/approaching_buddhism/modern_adaptation/recommendations/buddhism_west/workshop_tibetans_translating_dharma.html). We had some kind of consensus about a limited number of verses and terminology. Looking around this room, only Elizabeth Napper was able to attend. After that a small group met and analysed the conference. Their report is included in "Buddhist Translation: Problems and Perspectives", the publication we produced. This book suggests that translations from Buddhist texts, both Sanskrit/Pali, and Tibetan can be put into four categories. The categories are directly related to the environment from which the translators came and the period in which they undertook the exercise.

(1) Colonial rule in India: The first phase is the period of colonial rule in the Indian subcontinent. At this time most of the translators were either missionaries or else those deeply committed to Christianity. While it is creditable that they undertook to translate from other religions, it was inevitable that they brought with them their understanding of Christianity into Buddhism. Kern's early translation of the Lotus Sutra, *Saddharmapundarika*, is one of the best or worst examples of this period. He, for example, translated the idea of sensual corruption as "the flesh pots of Egypt", taken out straight from the Bible. Further he went on to unconsciously defeat the core teaching of Buddhism by equating nirvana with death. Another example is of Rhys Davids' translations taken from Pali sources. He found, in spite of all the evidence to the contrary, an affirmation of the existence of the soul in the teaching of the Buddha. Some writers, although they may not have been prolific translators, brought words into use that reflected their poor understanding of the subject, e.g. Waddell's term "Lamaism" is full of Christian prejudice against Buddhism. Waddell had lived in Tibet and understood Buddhism to a great extent, but back in his Christian environs, he succumbed to prejudiced writing conforming to the then prevailing attitude.

(2) Marxism: In the second phase of translation of Buddhist texts, the influence shifted from Christianity as the major one to that of Marxism. This phase spans approximately the first 50 years of the twentieth century. Most translators in this period were powerfully influenced by

Kant. However, the introduction of Kantian categories and concepts into the translation and interpretation of Buddhist texts did not help to reveal the real object and purpose of these texts. Stcherbatsky, for instance, repeatedly used the phrase "the thing in itself," a direct reflection of Kantian metaphysics, to refer to the absolute or ultimate reality. However, whether it is a helpful phrase for understanding the Buddhist conceptions of *paramartha* or *tathata* is very doubtful. Another Western philosopher, Berkeley, who was the first among Western philosophers to propose the existence of only mind, was a bishop who wanted to prove that nothing could exist except in the mind of God, and therefore God had to be accepted as the supreme architect of the world. Most contemporary scholars now recognize that Buddhist mentalist philosophers, particularly Asanga and Vasubandhu, have a very different outlook from that of the traditional Western idealism.

(3) Freud, Jung and Wittgenstein: The third phase can be said to run roughly from the middle of the twentieth century to the present, as is evident from the translations of some Western scholars. The new fashion was to look to Western psychology, as taught primarily by Freud and Jung, for conceptual schemes to be used in the translation and interpretation of Buddhist materials. There has also been a new tendency to adopt the concepts of linguistic relativism, particularly as propounded by Wittgenstein, for help in the work of translating Buddhist texts into English. There are many modern translators who, in their translation of Buddhist texts, have made large-scale use of concepts and terms taken from modern Western psychology and linguistic relativism. The most obvious example of these new influences in the translation of Buddhist texts into English are the works of Guenther; but there are many others who also fall into this category.

The common thread thus is that the translator's background greatly influences the translation, whether it means taking terms and ideas from Christianity, Western philosophy or other schools of thought. The result has inevitably caused some distortion, to a greater or lesser extent, of the original genuine Buddhist message. One must add that this problem is not only pertaining to translations made from the original into English. Similar problems were noted when translations were made into Chinese. The Taoist, and to a lesser extent Confucian, concepts influenced the translation and interpretation of Buddhist materials, and in some cases seriously distorted the meaning.

How then were Buddhists texts translated from Sanskrit to Tibetan? Perhaps the remarkable accuracy of the Tibetan

translations of Buddhist texts from Sanskrit is due in part to the fact that in the eighth or ninth centuries C.E. Tibet hardly had any well-developed and well-defined intellectual tradition of its own. That is to say, the Buddhist concepts and values embodied in the Buddhist texts were introduced into what was virtually an intellectual vacuum. To put it more positively, the Tibetan translators were able to read, translate and interpret Buddhist texts through spectacles that were not already coloured by their own intellectual preconceptions. The classical Tibetan language that we're using now grew along with Buddhism, which was newly introduced to Tibet. The language and dharma grew side by side. That's the ideal.

(4) A new spirit of objectivity and respect: The current trend is more encouraging. Today translators are either sitting with Tibetan scholars or they are themselves well versed in Tibetan literary sources to ensure that the right meaning is carried through. Sometimes such attempts lead to overtly literal English translations that become difficult, if not impossible, for the average English reader not familiar with the original language to understand. Still this is a positive development, for such relative difficulty in comprehension is preferable to wrong comprehension. This is what I have called the fourth phase, which I feel is done with a new spirit of objectivity and respect for the indigenous Tibetan Buddhist tradition, both literary and oral, and its legitimate representatives. Yesterday some people, perhaps some more conservative people, said it's necessary for lamas and translators to sit and work together in order to produce a

reliable and accurate translation. I partly agree, but partly wonder how long we can go on saying that.

I met Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche in 1973 as one of two young tulkus, a little naughty, trying to sneak out when he had the chance, things like that. Since then I've followed the tendency of activities of tulkus through reading dharma magazines and interviews, and I find his style is very unique. It's a very unique way of presenting material. I'm an admirer of him and also a fan of his films, especially "The Cup," as they also spread dharma in a different way.

I fully agree with the statement by Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche in his letter to the participants of this conference that enforcing a directive of any kind with regard to the Translation of the Words of the Buddha would not be possible, as the days of the great, all-powerful Dharma Kings and Patrons are long gone. However, I am also clearly aware that Rinpoche's basic concern is the survival of the pure Buddhadharma in the modern world. We know that the key word for achieving the goal of this conference is working together. Therefore, allow me to state that I have cherished a long felt idea that there is a need of modern day *Sgra-sbyor-bam-po-gnyis-pa*.

This unique conference is a perfect occasion to initiate such a project. I don't see any reason why a consensus about methodology of compiling such monumental work cannot be reached. That will be a real milestone in the journey of translations. However, since I mentioned this on the first day, I've heard no response to that. I'm a little surprised and confused. It may have been totally irrelevant, and if so I'd also like to hear that.

3. Breakout Groups on the 5-Year Goal

March 18, Morning – Jules Levinson, Light of Berotsana

I'd like to report on the Light of Berotsana conference held in Boulder in September 2008. First I'd like to thank Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche for permitting Jessie and me to be here. We're honoured. It was first suggested that we should hold a conference in fall 2002, but we were a young group then and didn't feel we could take on such a project. In January 2007 we decided to go ahead. First we drew up a list

of everyone who might be interested, sent a letter to them and encouraged them to send it to anyone who might be interested. Our list grew steadily, and at some point the circle became a circle and stopped growing. I mention this only to say that if you didn't hear from us, it was only out of our ignorance – nobody wasn't welcome, and I'm sorry I didn't know a great many of you.

We decided at the beginning on a few principles and a process to make them real. We have sent you our complete program, a long letter from Jessie and me about how we saw our conference going, and an image of the history line. Among several outcomes, the main thing we hoped to inspire was “letting the spark of your own intelligence be ignited by the intelligence of others.”

Our principle is translators talking to translators about translation. We trusted translators to find their own way, rather than deciding on a course everyone should follow. We were interested in the process of translation itself, and each individual translator’s process – how he or she worked. So we set up a series of groups of 4-6 around small tables, but they often grew to 10-12 people talking for 30-45 minutes about a particular topic and using a set of questions we’d designed to focus and guide the inquiry. Our aim was to facilitate conversation rather than looking to decide anything in particular. Then after a set time for a given group/topic, the group would dissolve, and we’d then talk about the same or new topic with a different group. In this way we were able to disseminate ideas among the group without someone sitting up front and reading a paper. We’d all been to too many conferences where the audience was talked at with papers delivered. However we did also have talks by Dzigar Kongtrül Rinpoche, Jeffrey Hopkins, and Alak Zenkar Rinpoche talking about meaning of certain terms.

The outcome from the conference was a strong sense of community, and we decided to form a guild of translators. In the wake of that, Jessie and I drafted suggestions for the guild and circulated them among a small group on the last morning, which we established by saying “please come if you’re interested in forming a guild.” The suggestions we circulated included ideas like livelihood, peer review, ethics, website, mentoring, how to consult with each other, further education of selves and others, ongoing conferences, and a number of other things. It’s a brainstorming document with a lot in it.

We recently set up a Google group, “Lotsawa Forum,” where we can discuss things with each other – ways of translating, any topic you want. Neither the group nor the proposed translators’ guild has anything to do with Light of Berotsana. Our sole interest is in getting something going to the point where the Light of Berotsana and the two of us become peripheral. We want it to be something designed, developed, and taken forward or not by an international group of translators.

We’d like to invite people who weren’t able to be in Boulder to join, and we’re in the process of trying to form a temporary decision-making group to develop this guild, and before we finalise it we’d like to invite any of you who are interested. It will cover issues like ethics, website, or anything you’re interested in.

March 18, Morning – John McRae, BDK Tripitaka Project

I’d like to talk about some of the nitty-gritty issues involved in doing a big piece of work like this. These are just my own opinions.

- Every translation should be associated with an explanatory file saying who did it, when, where, and what perspective or style of translation was used.
- Translation files themselves should be in well-formed XML, i.e. with explanatory headers and links to explanatory files, etc. There’s a lot of knowledge available on encoding texts, such as the Text Encoding Initiative that has produced conventions on how to encode translations, and the CBETA (Chinese Buddhism Electronic Text Association) people at the Department of Buddhist Informatics have done a lot of work to extend TEI conventions to render Chinese Buddhist texts.
- There should be a glossary file associated with each translation, including first occurrences of doctrinal terms and major names (place, deity, etc.), so glossaries can be used together as XML documents. This would allow integration of definitions with the Digital Dictionary of Buddhism, an excellent resource. I’m happy to volunteer Chuck Muller, as he’d be very enthusiastic to include terms from this project. Each time a term occurs, it could have its own entry with links to the electronic edition.
- All this should be done in XML format, including basic tagging about locations – the corresponding location in the Derge, etc.
- We should set up a committee to develop tagging conventions. XML is very flexible, and it allows each author to create their own set of tags to identify items of interest to the text-creator. It’s most convenient if people working on similar texts use similar tags.

- There should be a text database. Natural language comes in a chaotic flow, but given several thousand texts, this is best stored in a set of tables, i.e. a database. We can use MySQL, which is public domain software. Using database tables for some information and XML coding for other information is a very powerful combination.
- Copyright: For BDK we use an amended version of the Creative Commons license, which says anyone can use texts for not-for-profit purposes, and we'll give permission for any Buddhist group to incorporate our data into its own project.
- Textual translation can't take place without critical editions. I sat with Paldor who's doing collation of the editions in Chengdu, and in a critical edition you need to say why you're picking one version over another.
- In a former life I was a commercial translator, and in that world, the basic rule was that translations should initially be done by a native speaker of the target language, then they should be checked by a native speaker of the source language. I'd argue that model should be adopted here. I think there's a difference between how gurus and translators relate to a text. A

teacher of Buddhism will want to get at the heart of the text and transmit the most important meaning of the text to students for purposes of religions training, i.e. the teacher is cloaked in the robe of dharma. But a translator essentially stands naked in all decisions – every word on the page in the original text is rendered somehow. It's a very different process, so I'd suggest the target/source native speaker distinction be used.

- Peter Skilling talked of involving junior scholars. I think it's very important. If this project can bring together junior English, French, etc. scholars and junior Tibetan teachers, that would facilitate things greatly. It would also build up collaboration, and be good for the careers of participants on both sides. In my case, I went to Japan in 1972, and contracted with a young lecturer so we could learn about Chinese Chan Buddhism from a junior lecturer. That man, Ishishudo, is now a dean, a senior professor in Japan, and he says his seminars are a continuation of those classes. When we were young I could ask stupid questions and it didn't matter. But for translators to ask a guru a stupid question doesn't work. It's easier to deal with someone at your own status level.

March 18, Morning – Group Discussion

(Ivy) There was a request for an opportunity for group dialogue on all that we've heard.

(Q) I'd like to refer to something Bob Thurman said this morning: you said it's important for scholarly translators to be practitioners, and by the same token you probably think practitioners should be scholars too. That's easier said than done. Padmakara people spend a lot of time in retreat, and many have done two or three 3-year retreats, which is a lot of time when the rest of you are hard at work at your university. Academic translators take centre stage in this kind of conversation – you're used to speaking in public, and you're articulate and knowledgeable. But I'd like to throw in the idea that scholarly translators and practitioners have slightly different agendas and objectives, and although ideally it's good to have university trained scholars who are also practitioners, it's nevertheless true that the methods of academic scholarship come up with results different from what people like me are interested in. You're interested in the study of language, culture, classification as an anthropological understanding of different cultures. Whereas for more practitioner-oriented translators, we're interested

more in the questions of transmission and the living tradition of dharma that has brought the text and understanding of the teaching to us. It seems to me it's important to say clearly that in the translation of the Kangyur, the whole question of transmission has to be considered. It's noteworthy that the position of the Kangyur in modern Tibetan Buddhism is a symbol of transmission of dharma to Tibet, and an instrument of generating merit through offerings and prostrations and symbolic readings. But what has remained a constant, even if the Kangyur isn't read much, nevertheless it's important to receive the transmission/lung. If this group of people wishes to translate Kangyur, we'd have to receive the lung. And if eventually a canon is produced in English, perhaps we could use English translation as basis for continuing lung transmission.

(Robert Thurman) I agree. There are different kinds of academic – the anthropologist/historicist is one, who corresponds to the two-headed parrot looking down. He or she sees older things as antiquarian or dead. That sort of academic is neither a scholar nor a practitioner, just a guardian of a sense of cultural superiority. Maybe it's even

worse in Europe than in the US! To advance in US academia, you have to find out what's wrong with a lama; or else you're not respected. That's still the case – we're dealing with tirthikas in the US. But practitioners must focus on all three: ethics, meditation and wisdom. And wisdom is intellectual, so we have places like Nalanda, Samye and Vikramashila to cultivate wisdom. And Mañjushri is the original academic – the monster academic! Milarepa was not a Geshe, but his understanding came from his special ability. But in the mainstream, we need to learn something and that's part of practice. When people say, "I'm practicing not studying," that's a problem. (a) Learning, (b) thinking critically and (c) meditation: all are important. Retreat is important, but there's no reason that practitioners shouldn't have good knowledge as well. But on your side there should be an attempt to break things down. Years ago Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche and I had a conversation in the presence of Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche. We said most Western retreatants are not able to live in retreat forever like Surya Das – they need another job. So we came up with the idea of a 3-year retreat as "fieldwork" for Westerners, and Nyoshul Khen and Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche agreed, but still we don't have enough resources. In 36 years of teachings, I've turned down dozens of good people who wanted both scholarly knowledge and enlightenment, because I couldn't get academic scholarship funding for them. And as for lung, I think we should first get it in Tibetan, and then in Sanskrit or Pali if we can find the appropriate incarnation.

(Q) One difficulty I feel in places like Padmakara is that we're isolated. It's great to have this meeting, and I hope you'll be willing to share your knowledge so we can learn from you.

(Robert Thurman) Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche said he never wants the conference to end – I like that!

(Q) Robert, there was a time when the situation you described in academia was the case. But let me describe my situation so we can see how that academic situation has passed. I'm tenured at Emory, a school ranked in the top 20 in the US. I was hired *because* I was a Buddhist. I made it specifically clear to them. They didn't want someone to teach Buddhism who wasn't a Buddhist. Moreover, next door to me sits an ex-monk, also Buddhist, and another faculty member is HH the Dalai Lama, although I haven't seen him around much in the dining hall. Much of my work is on Buddhist contemplative practices, and Emory put more than \$5 million to fund scientists and people like me in the humanities to study Buddhist practices not as cultural artefacts, but to examine the nature of the practices. This is also the case for other traditions. This is not unusual these

days. Emory may be extreme, but many academics are openly Buddhists, and study Buddhism in a sympathetic way. And I'd like to make a distinction – I don't agree with the notion that you can't be critical and Buddhist at same time. There are two styles of Buddhism, and one can be critical, in other words it can maintain critical rationality that doesn't just accept something out of respect, but examines it carefully and recognises that the dharma can change over time, and also that dharma is embedded in the world at large. It's not incompatible with being a full-on Buddhist.

(Q) Don't think practitioner translators aren't critical! They are.

(Q) Why can't an academic be critical? I'm not interested in what you said academics are interested in.

(Q) I don't know how exceptional you are, but it's a new development.

(Q) The theme of this gathering is collaboration and our goal is to translate and make universally accessible the Buddhist heritage. To make it accessible, we need insights and nuances that come from practice, and whatever historical contextualisation will help us further understand. I see us in partnership, and I don't think any academic who has the interests you describe will sign on to this project in any case. I also have a question about transmission. It's easy to decide we'd like to receive lung. But the issue of critical tradition and transmission raises question, e.g. whether one should translate Daisho as it is rather than in a critical edition. To make a Buddhist tradition accessible, it's important to do the critical edition Peter Skilling is talking about, as it helps us understand the development and trajectory of the text. But since this morning, for me, it's no longer a given that's what we should translate. We should do it. But should we translate a critical edition, something that never existed and doesn't have transmission in Tibet? Since we're concerned about transmission, maybe we should translate the best single edition, e.g. Derge, and have an appendix of notations to critical material.

(Q) One fear I have is not so much that the academic world is devoid of practice, as it's clearly not. The academics present here are practitioners, and the dichotomy no longer exists. But one apprehension I have is that there's a risk that the academic world and format becomes dominant, and it becomes the only way, and translations will only be seen as reliable if they're from that world. I don't have a PhD. I didn't even go to university. I just went to India in the 1970s, spent 14 years in Dharamsala, and 8 years following the monastic curriculum. I learned Tibetan. I'm not from the academic tradition. Recently I applied to Chuck Muller to join his group on H-Buddhism, and the criterion was that you

needed a PhD or MA, and I wrote and gave my CV and said maybe I'm qualified, and I also said the criteria are restrictive, as you're defining academic ability in terms of having a PhD. But there are many people outside that. I'm from England, which was once a great empire, but now universities don't welcome Buddhist studies. It's not like America. Chuck put me on, and said if you don't like it, go and start your own listserv! Let's not ignore monks and nuns from India, etc. who are as good as our academics. And let's not promote academia too highly, as it'll erode the general trust people have in these other people.

(Q) Maybe we should start by capturing the landscape of choices to be made, and some group of knowledgeable people should decide. But I'm suggesting that it'll be worthwhile for the future if we document those decisions carefully – who was involved and what were the dissenting opinions, not to publish but as a resource for future students to understand the context of decisions we make. If we want to stay as a group, we'll have to live with decisions made by whatever organisations we put in place to make them. But just because a decision was made, it shouldn't erase all future debate. Maybe 500 years from now it'll need to be looked at again. We need the idea of revising and always being open to change. So let's capture the gist of our discussion and the decisions we have taken.

(Q) The idea of a critical edition has been raised quite often this morning. But even if we follow a systematic approach with the critical edition, we'll never conclude. Derge is always good, so it won't be translation of one particular edition of Kangyur. HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche was translating a text and I found some four verses missing, and I also found another more complete version. I requested him to shift. But when I came to translate the verses, although it seemed more complete it wasn't in existence. And preparing a critical edition takes a lot of time. Creating proper footnotes is half the time, and that's quite different from reading 3 or 4 commentaries to clarify the meaning. Having to prepare a critical edition will really slow down translation. So maybe the first step is to ascertain the meaning with commentaries and perhaps something like the Chengdu edition, and make a footnote of major differences in meaning. But the work of finding out the whole history of the text and what's more authentic is immense extra work. So let's choose one edition, e.g. Derge, and indicate variances – as otherwise we'll double the time.

(Q) I would break the dichotomy of practitioner-academic differently. The Derge Kangyur is itself an edited text, a hybrid, that brought different readings together. If today's lung is based on Derge, it's invalid by that same

principle, as previous lungs were based on other texts – so we should be careful where we put authority. And we shouldn't consider the academic process alien to the Tibetan tradition. It has a deep tradition of textual commentary and comparisons of translations by Tsong Khapa, Longchenpa, etc. Tibetan transmission has always been based on the use of critical reasoning and textual methodologies like those of post-Renaissance Europe. If we put that aside, we're losing a major tool that kept Tibetan tradition alive for centuries

(Q) Regarding the Derge lung, I can assure you that one of the main processes in the Tengyur is to look to find the history of the text, and HH Kangyur Rinpoche and HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche were always very concerned not to have a text without transmission.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) Kangyur Rinpoche had to gather transmissions from Derge, Lhasa and all four lineages so nothing would be missed, so we have a living tradition of the whole Kangyur, with nothing missing. I've compared the four editions, and there are differences. But all were gathered together, so we should cherish the lineage.

(Q) The distinction of academic vs. practitioner is resolved through a strong editorial hand. Many previous editions were by academics for academics. And the "Divine Stories" published by Wisdom last year was from a PhD, so it had brackets, etc., and we wanted it for a broader readership so we worked with the author to refashion the text, line edit it, and so on. If the editorial board is involved early and translators understand their target audience and the expectations of funders, then things that might be awkward for general readers can be resolved. For example, Bhikkhu Bodhi is a non-academic, but he has a solid scholarly approach to the Nikayas. And he's respected by academics also.

(Q) I'd like to come from another direction, one of setting the standard of the kind of result we want. We want accurate translations. We assume anyone participating is able to produce this result and we have editorial staff. Given the scale, we need to train young Westerners and Tibetans, so we will have beginners who need help. Thus we might crank out pages. But let's judge by the result.

(Q) Returning to the question of lung, we need to devote some time here. It's a question to lamas: what is lung? It goes hand in hand with the reading of the text, but can't be identical with the text or else how does it cross the language barrier from Sanskrit to Tibetan to English? There's a mythological aspect of the story of the Kangyur, not in the sense that it's untrue but rather in terms of its hypnotic effect on the imagination. This is the unspoken assumption that in the translation from Sanskrit to Tibetan there was perfect

equivalence, and that the Tibetan could totally replace the Sanskrit original, and that great translations were somehow definitive. We all know there is no such thing as equivalence. Maybe in Tibet it was possible as people could invent words. But there's no question in our case, which raises another question regarding lung. Maybe lung will end with Kangyur and won't go further?

(Q) Nalanda translations have since the beginning been used for lung – there was no question of whether they were suitable. It had to happen, as practitioners need to practice in their language, even though we know translation is necessarily imperfect. Also we have always established a

critical edition. In doing our work as translators, we want to know how does it make sense and those meaning-understandings have come into translations, and those are the basis for lungs. We know it's new work, and we hope it's improved.

(Q) Who gives the lung?

(Q) Trungpa Rinpoche did it originally, then a translator.

(Q) In the Tengyur, only 37 volumes out of 230 have transmission – so we'll have to translate many things that have no lineage.

(Ivy) I hope this goes some way to satisfying those of you who wanted group dialogue.

March 18, Afternoon – Breakout Groups on Community of Translators and Training Translators

The group was presented with an update about the Facebook group “Translating the Words of the Buddha”, which now has more than 1,300 people following the conference and more than 600 messages from all over the world. The group then broke into four sub-groups to begin more in-depth work on some of the key issues associated with the 5-year goal. Two of the groups (1a and 1b) focussed on building a community of translators, and the other two focussed on training translators (they reported back jointly as group 2). The following notes contain the group presentations to the plenary:

Group 1a – Community of Translators

(Spokesperson: Gwenola Le Serrec)

Purpose/Role

- Informal – survey / know each other
- Formal – pool resources, collaborate in a concrete way
- Leadership
- Cannot be identified yet without everyone together
- Guild? Need administration who are not translators

Projects for the next 5 years

- Establish steering committee
- When the leadership is identified, the priorities will follow. Suggested projects:
- Identify the texts
- Identify all existing translations
- Identify the translators' work
- Conduct the survey
- Website
- Funding

(Q) Has TLWA been commissioned to catalogue all existing translations?

(A) Yes, we're covering translations of all Tibetan texts.

(Q) There is a forthcoming conference of the International Association of Buddhist Universities in Bangkok, which includes 35 people cataloguing canonical texts across all languages, so we can collaborate with them.

(Q) The 5-year goal was to translate some representative texts – were questions like publication, style, footnotes, etc. discussed?

(A) We didn't discuss that.

(Ivy) Please can we jot down questions and then have group discussion at end.

Group 1b – Community of Translators

(Spokesperson: Jules Levinson)

- Purpose and role of the community group of translators is to help actualise the 5-year goal
- Identification of steering committee (which we took to mean “what it does”)
- Facilitation and communication among translators – it steers them, takes care of them, “care and feeding”
- Direction and making decisions particularly in regard to infrastructure
- Identification of specific projects toward the accomplishment of the 5-year goal
- Primarily – creating the appropriate infrastructure

In summary, we see the purpose of the community of translators as fulfilling the 5-year goal, and the steering committee is to ensure it happens.

Group 2 – Training Translators

(Spokesperson: John Dunne)

Consensus Items

- Canonical work requires special skills different from translating indigenous works
- Translations are to be done in teams involving target language speakers, younger Tibetan scholars and senior Tibetan scholars (consensus on this point was necessary to consider what type of training would be necessary)
- Teams should include a scholar of the original source language (e.g. if we translate from Sanskrit, the team should include someone as translator or at least an advisor who can help with the text)

We have no mandate concerning native speakers in the target language (i.e. as John McRae suggested, commercial translations are always rendered by native speakers of the target language – but we know of teams that don't use this process, so we didn't want mandate this. For example, Andreas Doctor and Erik Pema Kunsang are native Danes who translate into English), but final editing should always be by a native speaker.

Goals

- Establish a virtual institution (i.e. not necessarily with any physical buildings, especially at the beginning) for training scholars to fulfil our vision
- Identify existing institutions from within the dharma and academic worlds with translator training programs already in place (including all four Tibetan traditions, and including nuns), (and not just English-speaking translators, but also e.g. Chinese translators)
- Seek partnerships with these institutions by realising our shared goals (i.e. get them on board). (We have a preliminary list of programs to reach out to)
- Hold a summer institute (perhaps repeated annually) focused on:
 - Existing best practices for translation from Tibetan (to learn what we all do in our craft – something we don't currently know)
 - The translation of canonical Tibetan (as opposed to other kinds of materials, e.g. grammatical and stylistic issues that come up)
 - Training required for that task

- Draft a manual that recommends best practices for training canonical translators. We imagine that this manual would include:
 - Peculiarities of canonical Tibetan
 - Process of team translation
 - Literary features of the target language and its heritage of translation
 - Translation theory
 - Sanskrit and/or Chinese
- Draft a primer for the translation of canonical Tibetan
- Compile a bibliography on translation studies and related issues
- Establish a web resource that includes the manual, primer, bibliography, and other tools for training
- Refine by repeating the above – eventually maybe we can come up with a curriculum, and iterate until we have solid training program we can implement

We presumed this is supplemental training – i.e. the institutions we deal with will be ones where students already learn some colloquial Tibetan and receive some training in dharma. We didn't talk about details of what dharma training would be required.

Also along with a web resource, we would set up an online virtual community to facilitate communication among translators.

(Q) In addition to identifying existing programs that teach Tibetan, we'll encourage Western universities to link with Asian ones to encourage greater training in the oral tradition.

(A) Yes. We'll enhance collaboration among institutions while developing the virtual institute. Institutions currently offering training include:

- FPMT – 2-year program (focus on oral)
- Rangjung Yeshe Institute – 1 year program (focus on oral interpretation)
- Drukpa Kagyü program (which is ending due to funding constraints) (textual)
- Sakya College (IBA Kathmandu) – 1 year, literary, English and Chinese
- CIHTS
- Various Western programs (including Naropa and major universities)

(Q) Did you talk about the issue of bringing young translators on board for this project?

(A) The general idea is they can be incorporated into all levels of the project as trainees, no matter how green and inexperienced they are.

(A) There will be lots of preparatory work to document things, such as glossaries, creating resources, etc. We don't need senior lamas and translators typing those drafts – it's a wonderful way to learn about translation in an immersion way. Then we can pull the high-potential candidates out of that crop. And so necessary work that important people don't want to do can thereby get done and people can learn through that process.

(A) It'll take some time for people to be trained to the point where they can render accurate translations that can be used for this project – our initial goal is to set up an institute to train people so they can do that.

(A) Most people in our group felt 5 years is not enough to learn Tibetan to an adequate level.

(A) It could be like an atelier, where you start as an apprentice then eventually progress to being a journeyman and so on.

(Q) When we say “translators” we don't only mean Westerners, but also Tibetans. We need to develop lots of Tibetan students into a cadre of Tibetan partners to learn with us and work with us.

(A) And the training would not just be in English – but also in teamwork, canonical translation, etc., and they might also translate texts into Tibetan.

(Q) We talked about how we'd present things, standards for footnotes, etc., and raised the assumption that any new translations should be published as a series rather than a quilt of individual translations guided by individual teachers. But that's an assumption at this point.

(Q) It would be good if we could get more concrete in the next 2 days about how things will look.

(Q) The translations would look very different in bound book and online, particularly in terms of how you deal with scholarly apparatus online – whether you want it there or hidden, etc.

(Q) The leadership question is important – are we aiming to start a groundswell? I feel frustration as we have no sense of container to hold this yet, and it's Wednesday already, and there's not much time to hold this. I feel homeless now.

(Ivy) Any endeavour needs not only money but also leadership. This goes along with funding and planning. Also we've focussed on the 'what' so far, and now we're just getting into the 'how', and the 'who' will come. Please be patient, as it'll evolve by Friday.

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) The format of the final product is an excellent question. Being too scholarly will take more than double the time. So there's also a time issue. I'm not here to decide, only facilitate, but I'm thinking maybe it's 2-step process – first let's get the words translated

together with necessary footnotes. And then maybe the next step is go into more detail with footnotes, annotation, and scholarly works if that's what everyone agrees at some point. And in terms of leadership, we're continuing the exercise of building a 100-year vision. It's not targeted to any particular organisation.

(Q) For leadership, container, website, and publishing we need an umbrella name such as “translating the words of the buddha” although it's a bit long.

(Q) Yes, we need a name, whether our work is published by an existing publisher or by us.

(Q) When the word “publishing” is used, it's not in either 100-, 25- or 5-year visions – we said access, and publishing is a subset of access. I was impressed by John McRae's presentation, particularly the flexibility of having multiple ways of accessing translated documents when you use XML – from a few footnotes to more footnotes, hyperlinks, etc. so it's a study tool. We'd be well advised to look at “access” and not just publishing, and we'll need a robust website to host this. Having said that, we might consider the need for a minimal style sheet so when people produce first drafts, there's at least agreement on standard terms, not using diacritics, using Sanskrit, etc. – things that publishing houses like Wisdom have furnished people.

(Q) Why don't we use “Buddha's Words” as the name?

(Q) Or “Buddhist Heritage Project”

(Q) I'm still concerned when people say, “the steering committee can't be identified without everyone being together.” What does “everyone together” mean? I feel we should at least have mechanisms in place that will lead to some leadership after the conference, as if we don't there's a risk that things will not be in place. We need a “to do” list. Otherwise there will be a problem if leadership is not fully identified.

(Q) If we have an institute, we need a constitution and bylaws that a subgroup can draft, then elect a steering committee to steer the project.

(Q) Even before bylaws, this group should formulate a structure after looking at different organisational models – e.g. a steering committee is an academic model, which implies having a chair and co-chair, term limits, and elected members. But we could also have the organisational model of an advisory board that's appointed by a board of directors.

(Q) I'd like to second that.

(Q) There is a question of leadership among translators, but also the situation of translators within the larger project, where there are other stakeholders. Who will really make this all happen? It's not just translators. Translators are just one

level of leadership. This complexity caused our group to opt out of defining a solution.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) When we talk of leadership – are we talking in the context of the 100-year vision or the 5-year goals? It'll make a difference.

(Q) Rinpoche, you assembled this meeting with Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche. People are oriented towards their lama, and they'll never get together and work long term without the lamas taking leadership responsibility. And younger translators without jobs need sponsorship, and fundraising can't happen until all the lamas are collaborating. So if leadership cannot be identified, it means we need you two – then HH the Dalai Lama and HH Sakya Trizin – who should decide that this is what they want to see happen, and then sacrifice some of their ordinary fund-raising activity to really support this. That's the kind of leadership we will need.

(Q) Leadership is important for the 5-year goal, and this leadership should be the same for the 100-year vision, or else the 5-year goal will diverge from the vision.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) I'd like to return to the question of whose vision is this? As I said, I am only involved as a lobbyist. In fact, the idea of translating the Kangyur was initiated by Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche. We all know there's urgency. During this conference, especially yesterday, just as when I was about to answer, "whose vision is this," a lot of good news came out like all the pledges from experienced Rinpoches here, and there's another one on the way. This is why I asked about whether it is for 100 years or 5 years. If we're talking about 5 years, it's mainly Kangyur by consensus. These Rinpoches already have infrastructure and leadership in their own translation organisations, and they are already pledging for something. I still don't have a complete answer, but I'm putting this in your head. Also, the leadership may be changed. Maybe we can think of teams leading specific projects? This is a monumental undertaking. How can we run it with just a small group?

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) Robert Thurman said what I was going to say. It's really important to have leadership and guidance, but I was thinking that we're all here, we trust this project is important, everyone wants to support this work, and everyone is qualified to do it. I believe great masters are ready to support this project, and that Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche and Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche should try to continue this project, and then many others who are interested in this will join together. Whether we call them 'directors' or whatever, they're all members of this body. We need this. Here we're translating the incredible words of the Buddha that are the source of all the schools.

The first Khyentse started the Rimé movement, so let's work together. We need the guidance of Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche and Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche and all of you here. We cannot choose one leader, as leadership must come from all schools.

(Robert Thurman) Many things are going on already. There's Rangjung Yeshe in Nepal, Wisdom, Snow Lion, LTWA, BDK, we at Columbia and so on. One of the keys is for all lamas to get together. What you said, Rinpoche, is critical. Namely, that we need to translate this canon from Tibetan in order to preserve Tibetan Buddhism. For example, Tibet House has the mandate to preserve Tibetan culture, but doing translations isn't considered part of that. But it would give us a mandate to have our own board, supporters, etc. Lamas say it's not just about thangkas and art, but that preserving the tradition is about translating the dharma – it's a united front. We need all leaders of the orders, and then people will have the mandate to gather resources in a collaborative way. And as far as 100 years go, you guys are meant to keep reincarnating! Otherwise translating the words of the Buddha into English is for benefit of English-speakers, etc. and it would be a mistake to try to co-opt whatever else is going on. We should be sensitive to keep other things working together, as there will always be some fractiousness amongst Buddhists even though they are all selfless! Then they'll carry on, and you can help modify their mandate, but only from your level can you control their egotism.

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) I was thinking of coming to one conference then going home, which is not at all what we're talking about! And it was the same with Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche when he first discussed this conference. He was just organising it, and I threw in my stupid idea about the Kangyur that I've been thinking about for a few years, and Rinpoche agrees with it. And I'm happy that my idea about the Kangyur has been taken up, but I just wanted to make a noise and raise awareness. We're all caught in translating our own lineage texts, and I feel uncomfortable when I try to teach dharma and quote shastras and Tibetan texts but not Kangyur, and even then only from Tibetan texts – I'm not really reading the Kangyur. So it's necessary for us to go back to it. I appreciate your trust regarding organisation and leadership, but it's a group process – it's important for all Rinpoches, translators, and sponsors to work together and decide what's best.

(Q) To call it "Words of the Buddha" without mentioning Tibet feels odd. Thai, Sri Lankan, and Chinese people might feel something, so maybe there should be some mention of "from Tibetan" etc. If it's presented as a gift from the Tibetans to them, it's better.

(Q) We need leadership, and we need a concrete plan. We don't want it all to fizzle when we leave. I see at least three areas so far where it's important for us to continue the momentum:

- (1) Translating the Kangyur, Tengyur, etc.
- (2) Building a community of translators
- (3) Developing a virtual training institute – as we discussed in translator training breakout

If there are no steps to ensure follow-up, it'll be difficult for those plans to come to fruition.

(Q) On the leadership question, it seems to be a special coincidence that allowed us to meet with HH the Dalai Lama this coming Saturday. What role would we like HH the Dalai Lama to play? He seems to be the one factor that can coalesce all resources – so maybe we can formally request how we'd like him to be involved?

(Ivy) I'd like to clarify our process. Friday is the day for next steps and resolutions – what, when, who – so I'd like to ask your patience and indulgence until then.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) The Light of Berotsana conference took place in Colorado, and we're continuing

now. I have full confidence we'll continue further. And it's about our individual inspiration. Each of us will have responsibilities and goals and things to do. I talked to Alak Zenkar Rinpoche, and asked why he's not here. And he said this is a preparatory meeting organised by Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche and Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, but it's so important – it has to happen. This meeting has to happen every year, maybe next time in the US or Europe, and I hope every one of you will be able to join, and other interested translators as well. I have no doubt we'll be able to continue.

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) I'd like to thank Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche and I think it would be excellent if Light of Berotsana and the Khyentse Foundation continue to organise translators' conferences in the future in any form. This is just a beginning now. And I'd like to thank all translators, patrons and scholars for working hard on community of translators and training translators. I saw you all working hard, actively and energetically, and we have seen the results. I love what you came up with. And I really like the idea of a virtual training institute – I'd really like to support that.

March 19, Morning – Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche

Good morning. I don't think I can say it properly – to the teachers and most illustrious translators, please bear with my ignorance. Also as I said on the first day, I really have absolutely nothing to say to such a gathering. To tell you the truth, I don't even have anything to say to a dog. Just recently I was with some friends in Taiwan, and one of them had a dog. We were playing with the dog, and she had trained the dog to wait for a piece of bread placed on its nose, and the dog would sit for two minutes looking at the bread on its nose. The dog could meditate better than me! My span of attention is less than a second. In one second I think of so many things, let alone in front of such an illustrious group.

I have enjoyed close proximity with many great teachers like Kangyur Rinpoche, my first teacher and father, whose kindness I cannot even think of repaying. His kindness paved the way for me to be with one of my most kind teachers, HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, whose presence I had the fortune of staying in, but I really have to underline staying in, because due to my own incapacity I've not really been able to retain the slightest of his qualities or teachings. The state of my mind is inferior to that of a dog. I'm not saying this out of humility. It's the truth. But I have had the fortune of

being with such kind teachers, and also HH Dudjom Rinpoche was also one of my teachers. I'd also really like to thank HH Trulshik Rinpoche and HH the Dalai Lama. I'm not saying this to boast of my teachers, but just to say they had the kindness to accept me as their student, and I'm solely to blame for the fact that I haven't learned anything. And I live in close proximity to the Padmakara translators, and my brother Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche. I also have great gratitude to him as one of my teachers, and I also feel great gratitude towards Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche for having accepted me as one of his students. You might wonder why I'm talking about this, as perhaps you feel it's not relevant to translating.

I beg to differ. This is the most important thing. This is only possible because of their compassion and kindness, their bodhicitta. Although a few days ago, the word 'bodhicitta' was removed from our vision statement, as it wasn't part of the "when" or "how," but without that bodhicitta, we wouldn't be here. Buddha Shakyamuni has gone through so much hardship for so many lifetimes. But he's special not just because of that hardship. I'm sure there are many sentient beings that were tortured and will be tortured just as

he was, who are being flattened by rocks or chopped. At this very moment think of how many sentient beings are being killed just for our human digestion and taste. Are they all Buddhas? No. The only thing that makes the difference between them and Buddha Shakyamuni is aspiration. That's the major difference between Buddha and us. Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche made me talk here, and I feel tortured to have to talk in the presence of such learned masters and translators with such tremendous knowledge and courage. That's something so encouraging. We have the courage to be here. We have the merit to be here.

For example, we're all here trying to gather around translating the Buddha's words, especially those translated into Tibetan and still available – where did that all come from? That came from an old lady and her three or four sons. I'm sure you've all heard the story of how the Boudhanath stupa was built – it was a lady who was a chicken-keeper. And if a lady who kept chickens could be responsible for our being here and our being able to hear the Buddha's teachings, I'm sure we also have the capacity and ability to do things. She had great aspiration, and because of that, she had these three or four children, and they also made great aspirations. One aspired to be able to free people in that deserted, haunted land of Tibet where Buddha didn't go in his life. I don't even know if there were humans there at that time. Our wish here is not to pray that there will be some devotees in the Arabian Desert and we'll do this for them. That boy aspired and later became King Trisong Deutsen, and he fulfilled that wish with his brothers, who later became Shantarakshita and Guru Rinpoche Padmasambhava. They wished to propagate the Buddha's teachings and dispel all obstacles. These three sons of a chicken-keeper made that aspiration, and that's why I believe we're here.

When Trisong Deutsen tried to translate, as it is written in the biographies of Vairochana and Guru Rinpoche, when Shantarakshita was there and they decided to teach dharma to Tibetans, Trisong Deutsen was a powerful emperor and he summoned his subjects. I can imagine a big ground full of sweaty Tibetan children, with snot coming out of their noses. And when Shantarakshita taught them, they couldn't even repeat anything he had said. Trisong Deutsen was discouraged, but Guru Rinpoche told him that it wasn't complicated, and he had the solution. He suggested teaching children who had aspiration, who'd made aspiration in their past lives. So when he brought young children like Vairochana and other great translators, they managed to repeat some words properly. Even to be able to say *Namo Buddhaya* requires so much merit. And each of us can say that. And as you know, that's the fruit of so much merit. It

doesn't come from nothing. As HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche used to say to us, you need merit and the blessings of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas. Wisdom is something to be nurtured and developed; you can't just claim it as your right. And each of us has the seed of it. Each one of us here is Buddhist, I don't know if in same way as Buddha, but we're all aspiring.

I want to emphasise that aspiration is so important. The fact we're here isn't just by chance. I don't know who was who in past lives, but I have no doubt that all of us present here gathered around translating the Buddha's words, especially from the Tibetan, most of us were present at the time of King Trisong Deutsen, Padmasambhava and Shantarakshita, and their blessings allow us to be here. I don't know what we were then. Maybe I was a donkey that was tortured to carry paper and ink from China and Bhutan, and that's why I have this opportunity to sit among you illustrious and learned translators and teachers, and why I have the honour of addressing you.

. But I can't say I was even a donkey. Maybe I was a fly that got killed by a donkey. But I have no doubt that I was something in that time, and that's why we have the opportunity to be here.

Infrastructure is very important, and funding is necessary of course – but even more important than that is bodhicitta. Without that, what are we going to translate? What's the use? Why translate some words, like those Egyptian hieroglyphs? They are so interesting to read, but what is the benefit? At most we might know what a particular pharaoh did – but what is the benefit to us? Nothing! I'm not trying to disrespect anthropologists and Egyptologists, but from the perspective of translating the Buddhadharma, bodhicitta is of paramount importance. With that it's possible to develop wisdom, not just knowledge. That wisdom is what we're trying to transmit. I don't believe in transmitting knowledge for its own sake. What's the use of knowing how to get to the moon or being able to convince someone about something? Anyone can do that; you don't need Buddhist teachings for that. It's important, but the sole thing we want to translate is Buddha's realisation. And that depends on compassion, kindness, and especially bodhicitta. That's what our teachers from all traditions have said.

I've listened to HH Sakya Trizin and HH the Dalai Lama and also other teachers like Tengyur Rinpoche – and what most inspires me about them is not their knowledge. It's their compassion, which allowed them to become so wise. They possess the wisdom that can cut through arrogance and pride, ignorance, and jealousy. That's what we're trying to transmute – not translate. In the West we have enough of

those already. We don't need Tibetan pride and arrogance. We're trying to translate our teacher's bodhicitta into our own lives – that's of paramount importance. If there is a 'how', I'd like to suggest all of us here should not just take on Tibetan teachers, but as Robert Thurman said, we should take on this gentleman here, Mañjushri, as our main teacher. One of the qualities of Vairochana wasn't his knowledge of Tibetan or Sanskrit – even though it was said he knew 360 languages, it's because he had an ally in Mañjushri. It would be good if all of us could have the opportunity to do some retreat, even before learning English or Tibetan, and see Mañjushri. Perhaps we're too busy, but if we're too busy to accomplish Mañjushri, then what's the use of translating half way? If we could actually practice, and measure even 1% of the qualities Vairochana had, especially his compassion.

While translating, the most difficult thing isn't a lack of funding; it's our own ignorance and pride. That's what obscures us. In the whole of the Buddha's teachings, there's no mention of an obscuration of not having money, or not

having a degree. Buddha himself said that ignorance, attachment, pride and arrogance – those are our obstacles. We don't need to add an extra obstacle in the way of translating. The difficulty in raising funds isn't a lack of interest from others, it's because we don't have that merit yet. As translators, we need to accumulate that merit. As Buddhists that's important. If we're not Buddhists, we can just go around raising funds. But in order for someone to give, the person who is receiving has to have merit. I'm sure each of us at this moment can simply tap into the merit of Buddha Shakyamuni, Mañjushri, Chenrezig, and Padmasambhava – and the merit of great masters like Longchenpa, Sakya Pandita, and Jigme Lingpa. Their merit is enough to enable transformation. We need to tap into it. How can we do that? By practicing. We need to ask, and then there's no reason why their aspirations won't be accomplished even now. Perhaps I have said something that's not considered part of translation, if so please forgive me. Thank you.

March 19, Morning – Dzigar Kongtrül Rinpoche

First of all, I'd like to acknowledge what's happening here under the great aspiration of Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche and Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche and this gathering of great masters and great translators, discussing about the future of translation into various different countries and languages. Buddhadharma is the most profound and most unique and most precious thing. I truly am grateful for anyone who has done any work in this effort. Buddha Shakyamuni taught this profound universal wisdom which has enlightened the whole world from a state of ignorance, and it is due to his great compassion in turning the wheel of the dharma that we all have this chance of being on the path of knowledge of universal truth. This has served mankind in the most magnificent way, and transformed our own state of ignorance into a state of greater understanding of how to confront this ignorance and all the confusion that has arisen out of this ignorance. It has shown us how to attain a state of peace, not only for ourselves but also so we can be of benefit to others. And in this way so many great works of humanity are being done in this world. And because of that, the world in the twenty-first century recognises the significance of Buddhadharma for the world, and it also recognises the preservation that took place in India for many centuries after Buddha passed away. And how that moved to the snow land

of Tibet, and how the whole knowledge and training of how to comprehend this knowledge was preserved there, as well as how to put this knowledge into practice and attain some genuine realisation. It's not simply knowledge that does something to the mind of human beings unless there is genuine realisation. But this very profound knowledge of Buddhadharma has been preserved in the snow land of Tibet for so many centuries by the great kings, patrons, by the great kindness of Indian masters who travelled all the way from India to Tibet to spread the dharma, and by various Tibetan masters who have really gone so far to preserve it. Until this time, it has been preserved. This is the heritage that we have. This heritage came from the noble land of India, from Buddha Shakyamuni himself. As Tibetans, as the culture and country of Tibet, we may not have much to offer the world in terms of science and technology and modern civilisation, but we have this heritage. And it is our great honour to be able to offer this to the world at such a crucial time, where there is a need of something like this. Something that is able to address the situation we're in now.

Seeing that this is what Tibetans have done and what they have to offer, so many countries from the world are interested in the Buddhadharma. And so many Westerners from all different parts and corners of the world, from very

different walks of life, are becoming interested in the study and practice of dharma. And because of all the great translators present here, through their work, it's due to this that people are inspired and become practitioners and translators. So I think this is the context why this translators' conference is taking place here, and how to develop this – something that's already happening in the world – in the most efficient way to serve mankind, to serve the world in a great time of need. We have been discussing how all these translations of texts in Tibetan will be translated into various different languages, and particularly how the Kangyur and the Tengyur will be translated. I think it is always very important for us to keep in mind the context for what we're doing; the context for how what we're doing here is really serving mankind, the world at large. We may have some chance to understand the knowledge and wisdom that are there for ourselves and put them into practice, and not only for ourselves, but how to do this for sake of many others.

For myself, I've been a Buddhist teacher due to my very kind teachers assigning me from a very young age to be a Buddhist teacher, and if I have failed myself, as Rinpoche said, over and over again they did not give up on me. They always encouraged me continuously. So finally I had the courage to take the role of a teacher, and I've been teaching for 25 years in the West. And in those 25 years of teaching in the West, I've come to appreciate the great benefit for myself to be a teacher. How much I'm able to serve others is for them to judge. But for myself it's a great gift to be a teacher. It's a great learning for myself. There's such a great opportunity to put my otherwise mundane life to the service of others, and in the service of others in the most noble and excellent Buddhadharmas. This makes my own life so much more significant. And with this gratitude, this feeling of personal appreciation, I've also tried to do my best to give the teachings that I know.

And in the beginning it was difficult, because of language, and because there weren't many books translated into English. All in all it was very difficult and challenging. But over these 25 years, so many great books have been translated due to the kindness of the translators and the teachers who guided them. Now when teachings are to be done, in Sutrayana or Mantrayana, things have become much comparatively easier because of the availability of books. I'm from the Nyingma school, and we have a preliminary practice to be done, and there's a commentary on how to do this – the *Kunzang Lama'i Shelung*. It was very difficult in the beginning to teach these preliminary practices in the English language, but due to Tulku Rinpoche's kindness and the work of Padmakara, the "Words of My Perfect Teacher"

were translated into English and made available. Because of them it's much easier now to do this work as a teacher. I really want to acknowledge this and express my great appreciation to Padmakara and Tulku Rinpoche.

Also in the beginning it was very hard to teach any of the texts in the Sutrayana, but now many translations have been done, like the *Madhyamakavatara*, which was also translated by Padmakara. Now it's so much easier to teach *Madhyamakavatara* because of the availability of a text in English. And this *Madhyamakavatara* text, especially the sixth chapter, is one of the most difficult chapters and one of the most difficult points of the Buddhadharmas. Nagarjuna's view of emptiness, his view of interdependent origination, his reasoning to refute ideas of linear birth and intrinsic existence – these are the most difficult aspects of the Buddha's teachings. It was known in India to be one of the most difficult texts. But now it has been translated, and it is not only translated, but also translated well. The reasoning is coherent and clear. And it makes sense to those who are interested to study, learn and be taught. So this kind of work is so important, I cannot say enough about it as a teacher.

It all relies on your grace, the grace of the translators – your efforts, your determination, your motivation. And when we speak of your motivation, of course there's a need for a livelihood and financial aspect that needs to be there for one to live on, but your aspiration or motivation has to be as Rinpoche said. You should really think about serving mankind, serving humanity, serving the larger world with what you're doing. And you should believe in what you're doing – not in an abstract way like "Oh, Buddhadharmas is wonderful and great, a penicillin for all neuroses and illnesses", but with your own mindstream steeped in the teachings and the practice. You should know first hand how it helps you. How it brings so much betterment of one's own life and peace and joy. And with this mind if you extend your intention to reach out with your translation, then I think you'll be not only translating and earning a livelihood, it'll really make a difference in the world, and it already does.

So my request to you is to have a big vision, a pure heart, a deep resolution and a deep sense of purpose in what you're doing. And if you do that, I think over time more translations will be done. We have the vinaya, the sutras, and the principles of shila, meditation, and wisdom, and I feel we have already accomplished a lot. Yes, the Kangyur is there, and it's not a small task to translate the Kangyur. But it's workable for us to translate the Kangyur because both aspects of the Buddha's teaching – the profound and vastness aspects, the works of Nagarjuna and Maitreya – both have been touched by the translators. In the beginning some

conditions need to be laid out, and they are already laid out. Now we need to make it more profound, accurate and precise. But the foundations are laid out, and what we already have in hand is very encouraging. I think it's very workable to translate the Kangyur and Tengyur, and it's very important that translators really come together as one

harmonious unit to do the work for the present time and also for future generations. Also, the training of translators has to be taken up by older translators. And in this way, I feel very positive and very encouraged and I feel incredibly indebted to you all. Thank you very much.

4. Leadership, Organisation, Next Steps

March 19, Morning – Leadership

(Ivy) Let's discuss the qualities of leadership you're looking for. The question is who will take this forward, and what do you want to see in a leader to take this forward? That's a burning question, and if we go to breakouts without this, it's a little difficult.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) After Rinpoche's statement this morning, it should be someone who has bodhicitta, and isn't just pretending.

(Q) Are we talking about the senior editor, the administrator, or a person to inspire and attract enthusiasm?

(Q) Is it one person? My idea is maybe we need a committee.

(Q) We need a structure before we figure out what kind of leader we would like.

(Doboom Tulku Rinpoche) The reference to leadership has come up several times and it has not been discussed much, and I am a little confused. "Leadership" is an interesting word. We know that one who teaches is "teacher," but I think leadership is not only one who leads, but who also has the quality of inspiring others. That's the most important quality. When we first assembled here, I thought the leadership was already in place. I thought that's why we came here! In his first statement, Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche said he doesn't get inspired easily, but when he saw this statue of Mañjushri, he was inspired. And we're starting our work in front of this statue. So in reality, Mañjushri is our leader. Along with Sakya Pandita, Tsong Khapa and Longchenpa – and all the great sources of inspiration. They are in reality the leadership. And on a physical level here, the leadership is also already in place. I don't know what our reference is. If we're talking about

something technical, like an editorial board, etc., that may be different. The Rinpoches themselves have said they're not translators, and I don't think they can check every translation, and they have many other things to do also.

(Q) The Khyentse Foundation has been very kind, and I have no hesitation about the kind of motivation and love for the dharma that is pushing this forward. But I don't see my teachers represented here. That's part of the concern. There's a great deal of wisdom that could be tapped into there, and if this was a broader Tibetan endeavour I'd feel much more comfortable.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) In terms of the leader's qualities, we're looking for someone that inspires us. Secondly, the leader should know the value of what we're trying to translate, so we need someone who really knows how precious the words of the Buddha are and how important they are for our future. Our leadership should also know how difficult it is to bring this to fruition. And it should be someone who would inspire regardless of what kind of school we're following – all our teachers are trying to interpret the Buddha's words according to the needs of their students. So we need someone nonsectarian. That's what I'm looking for.

(Q) The qualities of leadership were determined by Buddha himself. There are three things: compassion, wisdom and power. These three are the qualities of a teacher and a leader. And our leader Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche has these. And HH Sakya Trizin and HH Dudjom Rinpoche and many other leaders recognise him as an emanation of Khyentse Rinpoche, the first Khyentse Wangpo, and also Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö. These masters were real

tulkus of Mañjushri in human form, and Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche is their reincarnation. We can see he is none other than Mañjushri himself, so we don't need to worry about his qualifications! The leaders of our traditions, especially HH the Dalai Lama, HH Sakya Trizin and HH Karmapa fully support this project. If they didn't think his qualifications of leadership were sufficient, they wouldn't have given these letters of recommendation. So there's no question as to his qualification.

(Q) Perhaps we can talk about the qualities of a leadership body, and go from leader to leadership. The leadership body of this project should command respect and broad support within both the academic community and the dharma world.

(Dzigar Kongtrül Rinpoche) When we talk about the leadership that can take this project of translating the Kangyur and also maybe the Tengyur in these upcoming years, we cannot talk about this out of context. In this context, we need someone who has great bodhicitta, and does this on behalf of all beings. And we also need someone who inspires a group of translators, as this group has been inspired. We need someone who could bring all the translators together, as has happened here as well. We also need someone who is dynamic and could also reach out to the world and gather resources, and also I think it's obvious who has that aspect. Finally we need someone who is nonsectarian and who is able to communicate with us on a day-to-day level. And that also is quite obvious here. I therefore feel the answer is really predestined.

(Q) It seems to me that the enterprise we're initiating here is roughly the scale of establishing a new university. I don't know how Nalanda was organised, but in the contemporary world we have a President who embodies charisma similar to the list of qualifications we're talking about here. The President functions as the foreign minister of the university or institution, presenting its public face to the world, explaining the mission, inspiring others to participate in the mission, and motivating others to support it with their energy and their money. And within the university there's a Provost, which would correspond to a COO in a corporate situation. As an outsider to this endeavour, I'm not a specialist in Tibetan Buddhism, but I feel the President has to be a well-respected Rinpoche who embodies bodhicitta and has the support of different schools, and we all know who we're talking about there. His task is not only one of being a lobbyist. But that person will need to work with a COO, someone responsible for guiding the day-to-day functioning of the enterprise, someone who knows a bit about the nitty-gritty day-to-day work of translation, and who knows

something about administration and getting people to work together productively. I don't have a candidate in mind, but the staff of Khyentse Foundation have exhibited a wonderful capability in organising this meeting, and I hope that whoever is selected as this Provost or COO would be someone who can work with translators and Khyentse Rinpoche in a way that gets things done.

(Q) The kind of thing we're talking about here could have a precedent in FPMT, which was headed by Lama Yeshe as President. But underneath the President, I agree that we need a COO or maybe an executive committee that is able to take decisions. I think the executive committee will consist of Westerners who have experience in an academic setup. Assuming Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche accepts, the question is whether we will set up this committee by tomorrow, or at least put in place a framework for setting it up. If we don't, there's a risk of this going nowhere.

(Q) I see three facets to the organisational structure and leadership: (1) one is source of inspiration – the President, the teacher – without that we won't have the motivation and will to continue long term. (2) The executive committee is indispensable, someone who reminds us about texts, gets us to participate, etc. (3) A scholarly council to ensure that the standard of quality remains at its highest, a group that focuses on the work being done. If we have those three together, if such a structure is in place, then this can happen.

(Q) I also feel this division of labour is important. And I feel we have a charismatic leader, and perhaps it would be good to bring in an advisory board from the four major lineages.

(Q) The executive committee will need to have a wide and diverse representation of translators from different teachers and sanghas. I have a concern, and I'm hesitant to say this, as this is a wonderful vision, but the people involved in this leadership need to have the capacity to have broad vision. They need to realise that with this kind of power and leadership, a large proportion of funds for translation will go to this group, which will also affect translators who work on Tibetan commentaries. So I'd like to know that these people can hold a broad vision and be aware they're holding most of the funds for translation, and that many people out there haven't been involved in this conversation, but their means will nevertheless be channelled in this way. So we need to ensure we have a wide representation and broad vision.

(Q) Regarding the executive committee, since it'll be virtual, we will have a range of individuals responsible for individual efforts. We're co-creating it, rather than relying on a single executive office. I'd rather have many people responsible, and not just one individual.

(Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche) Are we talking about qualities of a leader or what leaders should do?

(Dzigar Kongtrül Rinpoche) This is a healthy dialogue, and it's important to address these concerns. And we also have to keep in mind that work has to be done. And for work to be done, for whoever is in charge, we don't want to make it difficult for the leader by making so many demands and imposing so many structural constraints that the leader's job becomes impossible and dysfunctional. If we offer this leader

The group unanimously affirmed the nomination of Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche as leader.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) We should still discuss this. Since Doboam Rinpoche first mentioned this, I have been shocked. I'm still not prepared. I feel that up to today, the conference has gone quite well. But also we were talking about bodhicitta, and many of you have mentioned lineage heads and all the other important figures, and those things need to be sorted out. This is an important, monumental task – a big project. Half an hour is a short time to discuss leadership. I still think people should be given more chance to think about this question, and about the qualities of the leadership that you would like.

(Q) We discussed the importance of working in teams of lama/Geshe and Western translators, and also Robert Thurman mentioned that it would be important for the success of this project to have the active participation of each lineage head, so we would be wise to have the structure of our body reflect a model of what we want to accomplish. If we want to bring these two groups together, perhaps we could have a board of directors comprising 4 lineage heads and 4 senior scholars to direct the project, as this would be an example of what we want to occur.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) After reading their messages, we can see we have the support of all the great teachers. It's already confirmed. What we need is a structure under the leadership of Rinpoche, and we've now voted. We have to organise all the executive members and the rest of the structure, and here we have to trust him. But the vote is done! It's wonderful to have all these directors, etc., and there should be some experienced people, and representatives of all schools who will connect all the different teachers. Doboam Rinpoche could connect all the Gelug traditions, and we have translators here from that lineage. And when it comes to Sakya and Nyingma, Rinpoche can take care of it himself. I feel it's also important to have people who know the subject matter, people like Gene Smith, Peter Skilling and John McRae, and I am sure there must be many other professors who can help make this

our respect, we should also offer some of our trust that this leader will do his or her best to put the right structure in place.

(Ivy) Let's not put the cart before the horse. I think the visionary leadership part is there. I've never seen alignment so quickly, and if you all agree to this, then since Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche's name has been mentioned, do we all want to nominate him?

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) We could start another meeting all over to decide all this, but it has taken so much energy and funds to bring everyone together. I think it's important to have a structure that's solid.

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) During the break I talked to Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, and I feel it's important for us to focus on the quality of leadership and infrastructure, and what we need to accomplish the goal, all that we've talked about. It's wonderful to talk about the religious aspects, but it's also important to focus on quality and real stuff like how to do this work in the best way. We can fill in the positions later. That's easy. But I don't really think I can represent Kagyü, regardless of how you see me. I'm a Nyingma tulku. Look how much damage done, I've taken on someone else's identity – this Nyingma Dzogchen identity, and Kagyü connection too, HH the 16th Karmapa was one of my teachers, as were Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche, and Kalu Rinpoche. In the 1960s you were stuck where you were born, and there was no Dzogchen monastery in India. And the 16th Karmapa was the older brother of the previous Dzogchen Ponlop, so I have a great Kagyü connection, but I can't represent them here, and nobody in Kagyü world would say I could represent them.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) I was also recognised as the 8th Taklung Tsetrul Rinpoche, but I couldn't study there, and I have more connections with Nyingma, but that doesn't mean my heart isn't Kagyü – and we need your connections here! So again I'll request you. I'm sure everyone will volunteer to serve this important project, and I'm sure Rinpoche won't deny my connection.

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) I'll lobby for this group among the Kagyü!

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) While we're on the subject of previous lives and lineage, actually the Sakyapas think I'm Nyingmapa and the Nyingmapas think I'm Sakyapa, and I'm nothing. So I can't represent anything. And as a joke, I thought I was clear about my purpose for inviting

all of you, and my job in doing so, but now it looks like you're taking my job here right now!

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) I'd like to invite substantive discussion on structure. Previous lives are too complicated!

(Doboom Tulku Rinpoche) This is something unexpected, like throwing a bomb back and forth! I've been in Tibet House for the last 28 years, and people ask me "are you still there" – it's a bit embarrassing. As Tibet House director, I can't represent Gelugpa. My job is to represent Tibetan culture, not a specific lineage. Personally I'm Gelugpa, but I don't think we're talking about representatives of this school or that school. But it would not be auspicious for me to say I won't be part of this mandala – I will be. And in any mandala, there's the main deity, the 5 Dhyani Buddhas, the 8 bodhisattvas, and then there are the nagas and so on. So I can be somewhere in the mandala!

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) We need your cultural advice and also connections. The Kangyur is the reference, and as you've said, for over 30 years you have had connections with geshe, and it's very precious and respectful. We need them.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) We're going a little bit away from our topic, but it's important to mention that when the conference first started, when we wrote the list of who to invite, we were really focussing more on translators or Rinpoches who have a translating group, like Padmakara and Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche. Maybe this is one mistake we made. When you invite high lamas, it becomes so difficult, and the budget goes up, and many times they send a representative who doesn't talk much. So maybe this is not a cohesive and practical conference. But having said that, I still think all the schools are here. And I also think it's a good idea to not only invite the heads of the lineages, but also experts like Robert Thurman and Gene Smith.

(Dzigar Kongtrül Rinpoche) I think this discussion is taking place because we don't want to lose the momentum gathered here, and in order to carry this momentum into the future, we need someone who has the ability to ensure this meeting was not held in vain, with nothing coming out of these few days as a reality of translating. We need something to be done and accomplished, which is why we're having this discussion. So if we think about who could take this into the future, who would ensure it doesn't lose momentum, who would have the ability to turn this meeting into a reality of translating, who would be able to have the work done in the upcoming 5 or 25 years, this is what we really have to keep in our minds all the time. Then the rest can be discussed, the lineage heads, yes. And so on. But I feel that is just

peripheral. The essence here is who is going to be able to carry the momentum gathered here into the future, and who will turn this meeting into reality, and who will ensure that something comes out of this.

(Q) I'd like to say we've made a lot of progress since Monday. We have come up with 100-, 25-, and 5-year plans. And many people have voiced opinions as to who they think should lead, and some have said they don't want to be the leader. What's important is the leadership structure and the qualities of leadership. This can't be completely figured out in the next half hour or the next day. I'd like to propose that we should request Rinpoche. We have a voice here separate from plans and corporate structuring, and I'd like to ask Rinpoche if he'd at least agree to be the interim leader while we put in place a leadership structure and design about how to include all groups in this process. I don't agree with just limiting ourselves to the four major traditions, as there's also the Jonang trying to scrape a way into acceptance. Let's talk of everyone who has a stake. Everyone following Tibetan Buddhism is a stakeholder, and let's at least ask Rinpoche to agree to be interim leader while the rest is put into place. And we also have to think of 100-year leadership.

(Q) I'd like to respond to something Kongtrül Rinpoche said. This is a crucial moment when we vote for a leader, as it's not just expressing our devotion or admiration for a lama. We're pledging our allegiance and dare I say our obedience to this leader. From the Tibetan side of things, it's of great importance that this project should receive the blessing of all four schools. But we should face the fact that leadership is defined in relationship to those who are willing to be led. There are different groups here with different connections and teachers, and they may not be altogether happy with the way things are crystallising, and it's very important not to plant seeds for conflict, as things will fall apart and the Kangyur will become an instrument of division, which would be a catastrophe. One way to diffuse pressure is to distinguish leadership and the executive. Maybe our leader could be like a constitutional monarch, though perhaps not as inactive as the Queen of England. It's important to have a leader to inspire and keep things going. But on the executive level there needs to be broad-based collegiality from all the different dharma groups and translators, so everyone feels involved. It would be sad if the running of the Kangyur project should fall into one dharma group. That would be a mistake. It's important to have all involved, and maybe even an elected executive.

(Ivy) This is a critical point, and we do want every voice in the room included. We can leave this as an interim/holding position, whatever temporary term we need for a visionary

leader. Do we need more discussion? Are there any substantive differences? If not, I'd like to move to infrastructure.

(Q) What are the duties of the inspirational leader? What are they taking on? This would extrapolate to structure, and it might also help Rinpoche decide.

(Q) The duties of the inspirational leader will be in relation to the rest, and they are hard to define if we haven't discussed the rest of the structure.

(Robert Thurman) I hesitate to speak, as I'm not sure I'll pass the bodhicitta test! Talking about leaders makes people nervous, as they think it's about power. But as Rinpoche said, leaders should have our sympathy, like Obama. I want to help this project. I woke this morning as a worker not a leader. I'm almost 68, struggling with American academia, trying to get it to be a little more enlightened. And a university is a sort of missionary institution, one that wants people to wake up. But we don't do good job, as we don't deal with people's character. We just give them skills. HH the Dalai Lama said when he was being awarded an honorary degree that he liked it, as he got it without doing anything. But he said Western education is dangerous as it educates the brain without educating the heart, and that's dangerous. The audience looked like they agreed, but they did absolutely nothing to change the way they work. I'd like to really contribute to this. I'd like to give up practical things and work on the 100,000 sloka *Prajñāparamita*. Everyone talks about this, but instead they run with the 8,000 or the Heart Sutra. I told Rinpoche about this, and Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche said he'd be happy to share the translation of the mother of all Buddhas with me. I want to do it. The full articulation is there. If only we could have been present when it was taught, as everyone heard it automatically in every language. And second, I'd like to clarify something. My root

teacher, the old Mongolian Geshe Wangyal, asked me to translate the Tengyur and I formed an institution to do that, and I've done a little in that direction. We don't plan to stop, but we'd love to be overtaken by a bigger and more powerful organisation. And I have three salaries I want to pay in June. It's my responsibility. Whoever decides to be president or general, and Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche and Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche and Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche are there, I hope to be able to serve with what I can do. In the 1970s I did work on the whole Ratnakuta collection, and some manuscripts were lost, and Penn State press published some others. I'd like to finish that. So both these things have to be done and I want to help. It's not a question of power or leadership, but I want to do work. And if there were a way to integrate what we're doing with what others are doing, it would be great. The donor community would like to see unity among Buddhist workers for a change instead of the competitiveness, jealousy and rivalry they have seen for four decades. My hope is these Rinpoches here can oversee this, so people won't put their competitive ego ahead of this work. And if we can't put bodhicitta ahead, I hope we can at least restrict our ego-citta! And if we translate the *Prajñāparamita* in a great new version, Edward Conze's name should be in the colophon as he has been a great contributor even though there are problems with his work. I really am sick of people taking each other's work and trying to get their own names ahead. Tibetans kept everyone in the colophons at the end, and I think that's good. We should also do that and I hope we will. Let's not think so much about who will have power. That's the seed of difficulty right there – power. What is it? Higher ups have more power and more responsibility. Let's think not of "what can I control," but "what can I do and what can I contribute?"

March 19, Morning – Organisational Structure

(Ivy) In our previous session, we proposed a structure with at least three essential elements: (1) President, (2) Board of Advisors, (3) Executive Director.

(Q) Is the President the same as a university Provost, in other words someone who does fundraising and is the public face?

(Ivy) The President is the leader – the visionary leader.

(Q) I'd prefer an executive committee rather than a COO. And it should have representatives from major participating groups.

(Q) The Board of Advisors should include the main lineage holders. The Executive Committee should include a balance of lamas, scholars, and people like Gene, etc.

(Q) In a university, the President is the figurehead, but the Provost does the interface. And the President appoints the

Provost. So if the Executive Committee elects the Executive Director, they should ideally be translators.

(Q) I'd like to make a process suggestion. Let's look at the functions these various positions need to fulfil, and then let form follow function. Furthermore, I hope we'll incorporate other projects, not be in conflict or duplication.

(Q) The Board of Directors should include lamas, etc. They should help to define the vision, and make sure it's kept. But the Executive Board (i.e. the Executive Director and his/her Executive Committee) has to make meetings happen, organise them as has happened here with this conference, make sure the program is running and that resources are taken care of, and report to the President once or twice a year about how the vision has been accomplished. The Board of Advisors are great luminaries who can give insights to inform and guide the Board of Directors, and they also need to act as an Academic Review Board to maintain academic standards. I feel the confusion is between the Board of Directors and the Executive Board. In a small group, directors are also executives. But the various representatives of all the stakeholders are unlikely to want to be involved in day-to-day work. The President can be Chairman or CEO, define the vision, ensure it's kept, and define the main goals to achieve for the coming year, together with budget, etc. The Executive Board makes sure the job is being done and from time to time it reports to the Board of Directors, and it requests the Advisors/Review Board to make sure the work is going well academically and scholastically, and from time to time the Executive Board will ask the Advisors/Review Board for advice – but they're not involved in defining the day-to-day vision or in implementing it as executives. Rather, they are people willing to be asked for their opinions when there is a need to take important decisions.

(Dzigar Kongtrül Rinpoche) My concern is growing and I'm getting more wary as we discuss leadership and the politics of infrastructure and guidelines. At the end of the day, we don't want to lose our momentum. We all agree we want something to be put in place, which is going to carry the momentum to the future. And as for who will do that, Rinpoche has not accepted, but neither have we made a strong request. And also I think Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche sort of agreed, but we haven't developed a work force that will actually carry the vision into the future. Talking about all this is making me more concerned that what needs to be done isn't getting done. And even the candidates are getting more intimidated by this. We should really make sure we deal with first things first.

(Q) It might be good to brainstorm a list of all the big translation groups and projects ongoing, and think of them – some are doing recent lama things, not Kangyur or Tengyur things, as then we'd see people who are doing the work. We'd see momentum, and then we could think how to harness the various horses running over the plain – and not focus so much on structure. Let's focus on who's getting something done and how can we mobilise it.

(Dzigar Kongtrül Rinpoche) True – also who will inspire translators, bring them together, and go out and gather resources? These aren't simple tasks. Unless we have consensus and universally agree who has the potential and capacity to do this, I feel all these discussions will be wasted.

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) When it comes to infrastructure, we have many experienced people here, great academics who don't only teach but also run departments, and also large projects like the translation of the Japanese and Chinese canon and so on. We can learn a lot from them about infrastructure. It would be great to get feedback about the ideal structure, and whoever takes the position to lead should have his or her way to modify it. You cannot ask someone to lead and insist on them leading in your way. That's not practical or realistic – all these suggestions should be incorporated at the end. And we'll have more discussions to further improve them. These are just draft suggestions. I'd welcome more substantive feedback on infrastructure.

(Q) Maybe let's list the functions that need to be covered.

(Ivy) Then you're doing job descriptions. Maybe we can do this over lunch. We'll get all the input, consider it, and then a breakout can work on job descriptions. With 50 people it's not a productive conversation. We'll take their draft as input.

(John McRae) I'm shocked that Rinpoche mentioned me as a member on the committee, as I thought that of everyone here I alone was safe! But I would be happy to assist in whatever way I might be able to. Secondly, more generally, we seem to have been talking about job descriptions and administrative structure. Maybe we'll have one director of a committee of three, as we also need a secretary and treasurer, so working out the organisational chart might be premature. I'd go with the suggestion to request Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche to be interim director, and it would be entirely appropriate for this group to recommend and appoint an interim planning committee to work out the best organisational structure. We'd like to come out of this meeting with momentum. I suspect we'd also like to come out in a way that does not unduly raise suspicions or worries within the Tibetan community and leave us needing to spend one or two years interfacing and networking with

stakeholders in the Tibetan tradition to ensure this movement achieves broad consensus.

(Q) I agree – given we’re all in agreement that Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche might be interim leader, and since Khyentse Foundation organised this, and since this has strong and wide support from Tibetan lamas and schools, one possibility is that if we’re appointing an interim committee, we already have an effective group here in place. They are experienced working with lamas, the West, fund-raising, and organising an effective conference. (Applause)

(Q) I agree with both of you. Perhaps we could also have some kind of democratic input before we go, where we elect or select from amongst ourselves a group to serve as advisers, or people who would have some kind of input as to what we’d like to see and the direction we’d like to see as a group that the project should take. Both academics and the practice community should respect it, and we should get a list of all groups involved in this work and ensure they feel

represented. Let’s make an interim selection from among ourselves, to carry forward momentum in connection with the structure of Khyentse Foundation so something happens after we leave.

(Q) During the break, someone said I came off sounding sectarian when I said I felt unhappy that my teachers weren’t represented here. I was aghast, as I detest sectarianism. This is not about my teachers, but rather I feel this is such a big opportunity to heal some historically detrimental schisms that alienated me from the Tibetan tradition. I think if it were the other way around I’d feel the same way. I want to ensure that a significant Gelug constituency puts its imprimatur on this event. That would help to heal many historical rifts and I’d be happy about that.

(Q) I’m used to dealing with nonprofits where people talk about jobs and then don’t step up. What’s wrong with people saying what they’d like to do and volunteer what energy they have?

March 19, Afternoon – Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche Accepts Leadership Role

(Q) I’d like to summarise two points. First, a minor one: committees and job descriptions are critical to the success of this project, but can’t be done in a day or week. As it’s said, “a giraffe is a horse designed by committee.” And we may want to empower Khyentse Foundation here, which has done such a great job in bringing us so far. All of us here can continue to advise that process by the previously suggested method of subcommittees to suggest lists of papers and thoughts, and by writing letters. Second, my major point is to once again formally beseech Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche on behalf of all of us to accept the leadership of this noble effort. The Buddha himself didn’t initially accept to turn the wheel of dharma the first or even the second time. We’ve requested twice this morning, and he hasn’t accepted. So as an auspicious gathering of conditions before this holy statue, I’d like to request all the Rinpoches on behalf of all of us to make this request.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) My lips are all dry. I recently had my gall bladder taken out, and even then my blood pressure was never high. In my life my blood pressure has never been high. But after Doboomb Rinpoche unexpectedly made his proposal this morning, I was really in a very strange state, one I’ve never experienced throughout my life. I couldn’t hear people properly, and I went to ask Dr. Robert to check my blood pressure, and he said it had

gone up a little bit. I’m torn absolutely, because I feel I’ve been asked. I wish that I had been asked to do something that I’m able to do, capable of doing. Leadership has never been a big thing in my system. Some of you may think that Khyentse Foundation is sparkling and all that. This has a lot to do with my staff like Cangiolli, as they are really dedicated. The way I function is totally chaotic, totalitarian, and dictatorial – it’s not how a company or a foundation should function. The Kangyur project is very big, as we know. The vision is 100 years. But Khyentse Foundation will only exist as long as I live, by the way. When we talk about the goals for 25 years, 5 years and so on, I feel I cannot even begin to think how one could do this. I don’t know what the leader’s job description is. On the other hand, many of you have mentioned in this room and also outside – people like Gene Smith and Doboomb Rinpoche – that if we don’t decide something today, then what will happen is we will have a wonderful meeting, then everyone will go and nothing concrete will happen. And when they say this to me, after Saturday it would be painful for me to think that the whole purpose was useless and the Kangyur may not even get translated at all because Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche was too cowardly and didn’t accept this leadership, or whatever you call it. I’m really torn. And I feel very uncomfortable. As I said at beginning, I want to volunteer as a lobbyist. I have

no translators, and I have not translated even one sloka. And although I skilfully chose the name ‘lobbyist’, it now looks as though for five days that I lobbied for myself. That’s how it sounds. Matthieu was telling me “you knew this was going to happen,” but I didn’t know. I explained what I wanted at the beginning, as I said in my first statement. I feel there’s urgency as old lamas are exhausting and disappearing, and if we wait – we can’t really wait. Maybe this is very naïve, and I’ve even told you that I’m naïve, but the fact that I don’t have an active group of translators probably means in a strange way that I’m maybe the best host. My initial image of this conference was that the Rinpoches with active translating projects and translators would come here, and they would decide what to translate. I was actually not even thinking about the Kangyur. As I said, I’d be happy with 8 volumes of Kangyur, 16 of Tengyur and 32 of the Tibetan commentaries. I was hoping you’d come here with a list of things to translate, and give this list to me and other funders. Khyentse Foundation doesn’t claim we’ll do everything, but with this list I’d go around and ask people to help, as this I thought this is something I can do. But I still don’t know what this leadership is. But if you all think that if I don’t do this, the results will be that this conference will not bear fruit and nothing concrete will happen, that’s a big threat. I will not be able to sleep after that. So of course, there has been discussion about the board, the head, executives, advisors, and the real people who have power to make decisions. We don’t even have to mention that of course lamas from all the schools and lineages have to be consulted, and they have the final word. And we need to include all the Rinpoches, geshe, khenpos of all the schools, Jonangpas, Bodongpas, everyone. As Orgyen Tobgyal Rinpoche said, the Kangyur and Tengyur are the common property of all the Buddhist lineages, and so this work has to be agreed and have the blessing of all the lineage holders, or else this won’t benefit sentient beings. Plus we need people from academia – people like Bob Thurman who’s a spokesperson for Tibetan Buddhism, Gene Smith, and Peter Skilling. With their help, as a board or whatever – I don’t know all these terms – and with the Rinpoches here today, such as Doboong Rinpoche and Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, I have no choice but to accept to be an interim caretaker. But only an interim caretaker! Thank you.

I’m so nervous and spaced out! After my interim caretaker role, there is Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche who actually initiated this, and planted the Kangyur and Tengyur in my head, and there are many other lamas, geshe and khenpos. This is something we must not forget.

(Dzigar Kongtrül Rinpoche) Some people asked what I’m doing here. Last year I started a translation school here in Bir, a five-year program. We learn how to read and write, then how to translate – students receive a commentary, look up words in the dictionary, and translate. The idea is they have whole training in translation. Last year we did the *37 Practices of a Bodhisattva* and Nagarjuna’s *Letter to a Friend*. This year we will translate *Bodhicharyavatara*, then next year *Madhyamakavatara*, and then the Mañjushri tantra. I hope the 13 participants will develop the foundation to be independent translators or work as group. I think such work is needed and times have changed. In older generations, translators worked really hard and tried to survive in the field with chaos and lack of resources. But if there’s no way to train new translators, translators will decrease. There’s a need to put in place an organisation, structure and intensive training. I hope everyone sees the need for that, and hopefully with great teachers like those gathered here, more translation schools will start.

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) Before we go to work in small groups, I’d like to say thank you for your wisdom in requesting Rinpoche’s leadership, and thank you Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche for accepting. And at same time, I’d like to point out to everyone here that this doesn’t mean it’s now Khyentse Rinpoche’s project and you don’t have to do anything. We have to support Rinpoche in any way we can. We have to support Rinpoche’s leadership towards our common goal of translating Buddha’s words into different languages: the Kangyur, the Tengyur with Columbia, and the Tibetan scriptures that many of us are already working on. This project belongs to all of us. It’s our common interest, we’re trying to work together, and Rinpoche will be the caretaker of this initial organisation. We have pledges from Rinpoches and lamas here, and I’d like to ask all translators and patrons here to make your own pledges – and please remember it’s not Khyentse Rinpoche’s project, it’s our project and we all have to support it together.

March 19, Afternoon – Message from Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche (video)

Tashi delek to all of you present here. Incomparable protectors of the Buddhadharma and sentient beings, Kyabjé Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, Pema Wangyal Rinpoche, Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche, Orgyen Tobgyal Rinpoche, Doboomb Rinpoche, and other incarnated lamas; Precious khenpos whose nature is abundant in the wealth of the three trainings, masters of explaining the statements and insights; Translators, who have arrived from every direction out of deep trust in and appreciation for the Buddha's teachings – formerly known as “bilinguals” but these days there are many who are well versed in even four or up to eight languages; I send my warmest greetings to all of you for regarding this conference as important and making the effort to participate.

I regard this conference, which will benefit the Buddhadharma and sentient beings, as extremely important. I have already offered a brief letter in English to the conference, but since Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche phoned me and asked that I give a speech, I have a few more words to add.

First, as I reflected on the letter I sent, perhaps I was somewhat presumptuous. Nevertheless, we are currently at a time when the Buddhadharma hangs by a thin thread. It was the outcome of the combined and noble efforts of the Indian and Tibetan accomplished scholars, the Tibetan kings, ministers, and also the common people, that in this world as a whole, but in the snowy ranges of Tibet in particular, the great Kangyur containing our gracious Buddha's words, was translated from Sanskrit and other languages into Tibetan. This collection consists of more than one hundred large volumes, while the authentic treatises that explain their intent and meaning fill more than two hundred volumes. These translated collections still exist.

Not only are they available, they were translated from Sanskrit and other Indian languages without distortion, with precise attention to detail, so as to ensure the highest possible degree of quality. Therefore, the existence of the Buddha's Words in this world is thanks to the former dharma kings, the panditas, translators and common people. We should not forget their kindness.

At the occasion of this conference, I reflect on what our most important task is. I believe that for Buddhists in general and especially for Tibetan Buddhists it should be the dharma spoken by our compassionate teacher, as it is now found in the Kangyur. I believe we all share this understanding and there is no need for me to elaborate on this, no more than raising a lamp while the sun is shining, as a Tibetan saying goes.

We see these days a growing interest in the Buddhadharma in all parts of the world. And the source of the Buddhist teachings, everywhere, is the words personally spoken by Lord Buddha. These spoken words were recorded and preserved in various languages – Chinese, Sanskrit, Pali and others. But for the most part, the largest amount is in Tibetan. We have the General Vehicles, the Paramita Vehicle, and especially the Vajra Vehicle of Secret Mantra consisting of the great sections of tantra. The dharma preserved in the Tibetan language is the most extensive and of a consistently high quality. Not only was this great body of scriptures translated, but the lineages of empowerment, reading transmission, and explanation, together with the pith instructions, are still alive and being given. In the past there have been an untold number of accomplished and learned masters, and many live to this very day.

I mentioned that we live in a time when the Buddhadharma hangs by a thin thread. Many of these masters fled Tibet just as I did and now most of them are no longer with us. Imagine how it would be if Khunu Lama was still alive! Or Deshung Rinpoche, Bomta Khen Rinpoche, Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö! Likewise, how would it be if our lords of refuge Dudjom Rinpoche and Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche were still among us! Or Kyabjé Tri Rinpoche who recently passed on. These and many other masters, both learned and realized, are no longer alive. When thinking of this I feel a deep loss and sadness. It is for these reasons I feel strongly that we must commence the task of translating the great Kangyur as soon as possible, first of all into English and then into the other languages. This is of utmost importance. I believe that all of you at this conference share this wish.

To our great fortune, His Holiness the Dalai Lama is now with us and below him we have the throne-holding masters of the four major schools. We have authentic masters well versed in all the important topics, both sutra and tantra. They can resolve our questions. They can advise us. It is therefore important to translate as soon as possible.

For the translation task, we must first make a solid plan and agree on it. In this we should also consider issues such as the paper and ink used as well as the page layout and book design. Please understand that this task is to translate the wealth we share in common and so there is no need to think in terms of “them” and “us.” We should therefore all make an effort since we all work to assist the teaching and sentient beings – and there is no greater way to serve than this translation work. We should all fill our hearts with courage and appreciation for this task.

Foremost are you, the Rinpoches, the translators from around the globe, and the benefactors who assist you. Many of you have arrived for this conference. I believe that you have already shared ideas, discussion and advice, and that you have arrived at a certain level of success. This fills me with tremendous joy and I rejoice from the core of my heart. Now, we should not procrastinate for months and years. As soon as we begin, then we should carry through so that we complete the task of planning and agreement as soon as possible. Then we can bring news of the outcome to HH the Dalai Lama and the main throne holders of the four schools, and request them to give further advice.

Here in Nepal, we have a translation committee and even though we are just a small group of junior people we will contribute to translating the Kangyur out of pure motivation. We will sincerely cooperate in translating the Words of the Buddha, giving this work high priority. I know that we are all involved in our various projects. Here we are in the middle of translating the 13 Major Treatises, and many others. While continuing with these on the side, we now shift our focus to the Kangyur, the *Great Translated Words of the Conqueror*.

We should also consider how to divide up the various parts of the Kangyur. It may be easier to translate some parts, while the tantras may be more complex. Especially we should work together on the most difficult parts and consult the various masters who are still available. This will make the translations firm and dependable for future generations. I know this may sound a little too audacious, but I have a great wish to be able to work on translating some of the tantras.

Our translators presently go through the same curriculum as the monks in our shedra and try their best to be well educated. Still, we must also receive advice from all the masters of the various traditions. When it comes to accomplishing an important goal, we must, as the Tibetan saying goes, carry the banner in common. This banner that we are trying to lift is no small banner – it is enormous, and to ensure success, everyone should contribute. In this way everyone must be consulted, be allowed to reflect, so that we all agree on one goal and a single strategy.

Let us all give our innermost to the Three Jewels, completely, so that we have an auspicious beginning, middle and end. To ensure that, we should base our collaboration on harmony, mutual cooperation and the understanding that we share the same goal. We Tibetans regard all the thousands of volumes of scriptures written by the learned and realized masters of Tibet as the heart in our chests, the eyes in our heads, as wish-fulfilling jewels. Why? Because they are the Buddhadharma.

Kyabjé Trijang Rinpoche once told me that he was involved in the work of making a catalogue of the books in the Potala Library, as ordered by HH the 13th Dalai Lama. I was in Lhasa at the time, as was Ku-ngo Ta Lama. “There are thousands upon thousands of books,” he exclaimed, “there is surely no end to this job.” It took many months to complete it. I believe these books are still there. These were books only written by Tibetan masters. There were many other works written by the Indian masters, and they form the basis for the Tengyur. But the foundation for them all is the Kangyur, the Translated Words. We regard these Words as the most important validator. A valid text has to accord with the Buddha’s Words, the statements of the noble masters, evident facts, and our guru’s instructions. We all know these three or four ways of validating. So the first, the Buddha’s Word, is extremely important.

Now, we need to discuss which parts of the Kangyur are most important and how to translate them, and among them, how to translate the tantras. When translating, we should discuss how important it is to receive empowerment, reading transmission and oral instructions. Likewise, for translating the Vinaya, would it be better to have ordained sangha members make the translations? In other words, I feel all of this requires a lot of advice, reflection and discussion.

I am neither personally capable nor daring enough to outline the best strategy. However, yesterday I received a phone call from Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche and also had some words with Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche and they asked me to add some spoken words to the overambitious letter I previously sent. They expressed their delight at my pretentiousness. I know I am a simple person, honestly. But still, I feel strongly that unless we begin this most vital undertaking, it will be extremely difficult to accomplish in the future. That’s for sure. So please don’t delay for months and years! We need to agree on a plan as soon as we can. That’s what I wanted to say.

Headed by you Rinpoches, I offer tashi delek to you all. May your lives be firm and may your activities expand, so that the Buddhadharma may shine like broad daylight. I pray that the Kangyur may be translated as the primary goal and in the future also the Tengyur will follow. And then the major works of the Tibetan masters, like for instance the writings of the early Kadampa spiritual teachers. Khenchen Appey Rinpoche recently told me, “The Kadampa writings are completely connected with the major scriptures.” That is one reason to give them a high priority. Among the Nyingma masters, Longchen Rabjam was an outstanding siddha and his works are incredible. Nevertheless, Khunu Rinpoche told me, “there are people who question whether his writings are

connected with the major scriptures, such as Madhyamika, Pramana or Abhidharma.” These days, however, we receive some of his writings on these topics.

Let us pay attention not only to the teachings from the Tibetan masters of all lineages, without being partisan, but also to the writings existent in Pali, Sanskrit and Chinese. We should translate original scriptures if they do not exist in Tibetan, for instance the *bye drag shes mdzod chen mo*, which seems to have been omitted. HH the great 13th Dalai Lama gave this special attention and likewise does HH the 14th Dalai Lama.

For you translators, you all know that the Kangyur is presently the Buddha’s primary representative, in body,

speech and mind. It is this collection that should be our focus for listening, reflecting and practicing. As it is said “Observing discipline, and having listened and reflected, one applies oneself fully to meditation.” So first ethical conduct is important, which means that at least one needs to be a Buddhist layperson that has accepted the Three Jewels. Second is to hear the Dharma. Third is to gain certainty through reflection and finally one should assimilate the meaning through training. That is vital.

Now this simple person was forced to and succeeded in speaking many presumptuous words. Please be tolerant. Tashi Delek!

Translated by Erik Pema Kunsang

The group then broke into three sub-groups to discuss: Tools and Resources, Collaboration with Tibetan Teachers and Priority Texts. (Their reports were presented the next day.)

March 20, Morning – Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche

First of all, I’m just here to follow my teacher. Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche is one of my teachers and he asked me to come. I’m not here as a translator nor scholar. I can barely speak Tibetan. I can speak but not really well enough. So I don’t know why I’m here to start with, but I will say a few words in repetition of what I’ve heard and learned from you. First I’d like to thank Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche and everyone who made this meeting possible, as well as Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche who inspired Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche to begin this project. And I’d like to thank every one of you here, learned scholars and translators. I learned a lot from your experience and knowledge. I have attended many meetings, but this one is very inspiring. I hope I’ll have more opportunity in future to learn from each one of you.

I’d like to add a few words. In 40 years since the 1960s, I have had the strange karma to be with Westerners. I started with hippies, and they didn’t speak Tibetan and I did, so we started working together. I learned from them, although I’m not sure they learned from me. I learned things that were important for me. First, being able to translate isn’t an easy thing at all. When I request someone ‘please can you translate this’, and they think I’m stupid, why? Because they have no idea what they’re getting at, and many of them didn’t know how to write in their own language. And once we have a draft, we have to take a long time to rewrite and edit. One book sometimes takes ten years. I realise this is

because we haven’t checked our translators in our target language. To translate well, you have to master the target language, in writing, literature and poetry. And just because you can speak Tibetan doesn’t mean you can read or write it. So we have the fortune to begin this incredible project and we need incredible preparation. And with your help it’s important that we train many young Western or Tibetan students to prepare. First they need academic knowledge and to really learn their own language, and then to learn Tibetan. First they need to learn how to speak Tibetan. Not necessarily the Golok dialect, as then you need translators to speak to other Tibetans. Once the great Khenpo Wanglo went to see HH the Dalai Lama and they needed translators to speak to one another, as it was very hard to understand his Tibetan! Also you all know that when we talk about Kangyur and Tengyur, it’s really vast. It’s not something religious. It covers every subject, so we really need knowledge that will encompass everything. This is very important.

Also we often have difficulties, and we wonder what’s the use of translating these books, as we feel they might not be that useful to people. My teacher HH Kangyur Rinpoche, who left Tibet before 1959, knew and felt what would happen, and he carried books and books out with him. And when we travelled in India, the army thought we were bringing incredible wealth, and they opened box after box – 120 bundles – and all they found was books. He brought the Kangyur and many commentaries and great writings of

teachers. He used to say wealth is important, but not compared to these books. They are the world's heritage, not just Tibetan. He would say nobody can rewrite the Buddha's words. They are the Buddha's words. And that great wisdom is the result of hundreds of years of research. It's a treasure and heritage of mankind that needs to be preserved and translated into other languages. I used to think there must be original Kangyur and Tengyur texts available in Sanskrit, but there's hardly anything in the library. My teacher said there's an important reason to translate these texts into other languages, so we can preserve these teachings. It's not just the heritage of one tradition or one civilisation or one nation – it's the heritage of the world. There's so much world heritage and the UN protects old sites and buildings, but the real world heritage is Kangyur and Tengyur, which will contribute to the future of mankind. And everything in the Kangyur is directed towards bringing happiness and ultimate freedom – there's no mention of how to start a war. We're all looking for peace and happiness, and the Kangyur and Tengyur will really contribute to the happiness, peace and freedom of all mankind.

It's amazing that Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche and all you have this incredible courage. As Rinpoche said, it's a result of our fortune. Kangyur Rinpoche used to say that we need to accumulate great merit and virtue even to have the fortune to study four lines. As we can read in the life stories of bodhisattvas, even to read four lines you need great virtue. And so your virtue is coming to fruition now to share with others. I appreciate all your connections and merit. And now on the basis of this meeting, I really hope we can bring together a result, a fruit that can be shared with all mankind. Our first target language might be English, but I believe many people don't read English, for example in Latin America and other countries they speak languages such as Spanish, Portuguese and French. We should also be able to translate into other languages, so that this work will be an incredible contribution for mankind. And we should also translate into Arabic languages. Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche said he studied the Koran, and there's a need for dharma translated into Arabic languages – it'll bring harmony and peace to world. Now with computers and Internet, English is the international language. But it's also very important to translate into other languages.

Also, as many scholars have mentioned, it's urgent to translate now. In 1960, Kangyur Rinpoche came to a Nyingma initiation of over 100 great teachers, and when you look at the photos now, only a few of these great masters are left. Many of you had the fortune to study with HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche and HH Dudjom Rinpoche and other

great teachers. Whenever you would ask them questions, they would know all the subjects. E.g. HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche was incredibly learned in Tibetan medicine and astrology, and he's a great poet and writer, and he's also incredibly learned in philosophy, and not only in Nyingma tradition. He studied with all the different traditions. If you look at the 25 volumes in his collections, there's a whole volume on what he studied from each of the four traditions. These great teachers can teach in any tradition according to the needs of the students. For example, HH the Dalai Lama received a very rare transmission from HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche where the lineage had been lost, even some lineages of Shantideva. These teachers want to preserve the heritage, no matter from which lineage. Now we only have a few great teachers among the four traditions who are really knowledgeable, so it's urgent for us to start this project. Already it's a bit delayed, but it'll be better now than in a few decades. There are khenpos coming up, but there is nothing to compare to those learned ones of the past.

It's amazing that we have all these scholars, translators and learned ones all able to join together. All traditions need to be preserved, but all draw from Buddha's words, so it's so important that all need to come together. In the 1970s I was travelling with HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, and there was a scholar who was translating a text, but he didn't have great Tibetan teachers or Dzogchen masters to work with him. Rinpoche asked me to look at his work, and instead of translating the title as "penetrating the natural state", he had misunderstood the meaning of the words and given the title "copper dust". This example shows we need learned scholars, especially for the tantras, and then we really need qualified teachers. For example there are words like "kill your father and mother and destroy countries and people," and if we translate this as it is, it sounds really weird! But for example "cities and regions of the country" means "concepts and thoughts," so we need research and guidance, or else the Kangyur will turn into something very violent! So it's very important to have our teachers and work with them as needed. To study in the traditional way takes so much time, and we need freedom to work for ourselves. But when we're stuck with phrases, we need their help. For example, I studied medicine and memorised whole texts. The terminology used in medicine is quite different from general terminology. For example, the words for forefinger/middle finger/ring finger are *sön*, *gen*, *chak*, and in the old days an ordinary Tibetan wouldn't have known what this meant. The terminology is quite different from one subject to another, e.g. in medicine and astrology, so we need qualified scholars and accomplished masters to be able to translate these texts.

And it takes a long time for us to translate things. Why? I sometimes notice young translators are intelligent, but they forget things, are not sharp enough. So it's very important that translators need to study and also practice, combined together. There is a story about an old man from India who didn't even know how to read and write, and who practiced the Mañjushri sadhana overnight, and then he became more learned than the great panditas. We need to do a little practice of Mañjushri, and then on the basis of that we will be able to do our translations much faster than usual. When HH Kangyur Rinpoche was 11, he met Lama Mipham, who told him "lama" means "someone who just enjoys gifts and offerings, someone who is just preparing for his hell." He asked Kangyur Rinpoche to read the *Mañjushri-Nama-Sangiti*, and he was pleased. He gave him the Mañjushri initiation and said, "Just as yaks come from baby yaks, great scholars come from boys. So you must study." And after that, Kangyur Rinpoche would read a text a few times and then never forget. He gained such incredible knowledge through the practice of Mañjushri. Many of you must have done this, and I think it's important for us to practice as well. I'm not trying to make you practitioners. As we saw earlier this week, even the word 'bodhicitta' is not a suitable thing. I have lived in the West now longer than in Tibet, and I know many people are interested in the teachings but don't want to become 'Buddhist', even though they have a good heart. HH the Dalai Lama often speaks about having a 'good heart', and that is bodhicitta. When we do translations, it's important to find the right word in our target languages. We must not keep the Sanskrit. And I notice our translators often translate words back into Sanskrit, such as *samsara*, *bodhicitta*, etc. so poor readers have to find out what it means. Maybe this will change, but right now these words aren't common. So it's important to find the right word, as the Tibetans did, e.g. *ratna* is *kün chok*. Many teachers have told us that it's important to translate words into the target language. In the eighth century Trisong Deutsen really wanted the Buddha's words translated, and Shantarakshita insisted they should be

completely translated into Tibetan, with no words left in Sanskrit. So new words were found in Tibetan. I am amazed how those translators found and chose the right words. When you read Tibetan, you can understand the Sanskrit so clearly. Likewise we need to find the right terms in English, like Trungpa Rinpoche did – words that also carry the meaning – incredible words. So let's translate into the target language, not from Tibetan back to Sanskrit. It's really important.

And some people might think, I'm in my 50s or 60s already, how can I learn this language? I would encourage you. When Kangyur Rinpoche was in his 70s, he used to say even if you are going to die tomorrow you should study today, and then in your next life you will have new treasures in your hand, so you should not get discouraged. In his 70s, my father would learn French – I still have his notes. And it's a pity he's not here today, as he'd be so happy with this project. It's the same with HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. I told him in the 1970s about translation of Kangyur to English, and he said it's really important. But he said first we should translate the life of the Buddha so people will be inspired. And I'm so inspired this is happening. And I'd like to thank everyone here. This is one of the most unique heritages of mankind – this is really important. And for young translators, I'd like to encourage you to develop and preserve your courage. Don't limit it. You should have the courage to move mountains, but never allow yourself to have pride, as pride closes the door of learning. We use the word wrongly, saying, "I'm proud of you" instead of "I'm encouraged by you." If you think you know everything, you'll never ask anything, and so you can't improve. For new students, we must encourage them to develop courage and confidence, but never pride. We should do this out of love. If they have pride, they will think they know everything, and they will even try to push you out of your throne. So first try to train their minds so they can become great bodhisattvas to help all sentient beings.

(Alex Berzin) I'd like to offer the translation I did of *Mañjushri-Nama-Sangiti*. (Offered after Rinpoche's address)

March 20, Morning – Matthieu Ricard, Shechen Monastery / Padmakara

Even in the midst of the most profound expression of sacred dance there are clowns, as an integral part of the proceedings. For years, I've been fulfilling that role! It feels like I'm a donkey trying to catch the great stallions of the teachings. But Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche has already claimed

the position of donkey, so perhaps I'm the farmer who collects the golden manure. There's a Tibetan saying "Although you don't know your ABC, you pretend to be fluent in Kangyur and Tengyur." And after 40 years I still can't distinguish *ka kha ga!* When HH Dilgo Khyentse

Rinpoche asked me to bring books from the third floor and asked for “Rinchen Terdzö, *kha*,” I brought three volumes, left two outside and guessed which one he wanted. After many years, he’d say, “Bring the second *kha*,” and he’d joke to other teachers “Matthieu has a first, second and third *kha*” Rinpoche says he can’t speak English. It has been said that Vairochana is like the sky, and Ka and Cho are like the sun and moon, and there is also the morning star, Venus. In front of them, I feel like a tiny firefly. I feel like a wet matchbox! How can we proceed with translation? Look at the criteria for lotsawas established by King Trisong Deutsen. Ideally you should have full realisation. In the medium case, you should have permission and blessing from the yidam. If not that, at least you should have proficiency in five major traditional sciences. So what’s left? I’m not speaking for you, as you may have many of those criteria. But for me, the only thing I can see is that I have the encouragement and blessing of my teachers. At least there’s something there. And in the case of Kangyur Rinpoche and Khyentse Rinpoche, he is like Mañjushri in human flesh, so at least perhaps I can fulfil some of his advice. Pride has no justification, and it’s said that the water of qualities will never stay on top of the mountain of pride. And Khyentse Rinpoche said people with qualities, great teachers, are so humble. It’s like the image of Khyentse Rinpoche and HH the Dalai Lama – they were almost vying with humility, prostrating to each other in the dust. When you see that, it’s an incredible lesson. And there’s an anecdote of two great khenpos from Germang who came to Nepal, and Khyentse Rinpoche was very pleased and asked them to teach in the shedra, and one of them said “we can’t do that, as I don’t know anything and he doesn’t either” and the other one agreed.

I think we need at least enthusiasm for trying to share the teachings and serve the dharma. And we can remember the stories of the great translators of the past. One went to India, and he was so enthusiastic that he was running for the first kilometres. And he wasn’t going to see the Taj Mahal, but to dangerous places with bandits. He endured incredible hardships, but he had such great enthusiasm. All these are extraordinary teachings for us as we proceed with translating. And the respect our teachers had for the texts and their own teachers is unbelievable. Khyentse Rinpoche’s first root teacher before he met Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö was Shechen Gyaltsap Rinpoche, and at one point someone brought him a piece of Shechen Gyaltsap Rinpoche’s general teaching on ngöndro, which is an extraordinary 700 page teaching. And when it came, Khyentse Rinpoche put the book on his head and said, “All the gold of the world is no match for this.” In the morning in his room, he opened a

closet – this was not a closet for ties and shoes, but filled with books. And when he needed a book, he’d said, “bring the second volume of the Great Kind One.” He wouldn’t even dare to utter the name of his teacher. We need to emulate this kind of respect and compassion. There were many great teachers with realisation, but what makes the difference with a universal teacher like HH Dudjom Rinpoche that can really benefit beings is the degree of their compassion – that is what makes an exceptional master.

We have talked about the eight chariots and not being sectarian. One day Khyentse Rinpoche was giving teachings by Jamgön Kongtrül, and one night he said it’s only out of sheer ignorance of those teachings that we can be sectarian, as they have a complete path to enlightenment. Otherwise there’s no way we can be sectarian. It’s pure neglect and ignorance. That’s an immense lesson.

Now let me say a little about translation. I’d like to share my own case, even though it’s very personal. Khyentse Rinpoche encouraged me to concentrate on inspirational texts like namtars, biographies, and teachings that turn the mind to the dharma, like ngöndro teachings and the *Kunzang Lama’i Shelung*, and also pieces of spiritual advice. For deeper texts, he didn’t feel they should be open to the public. Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche has said that when we speak of restricted translations, it’s hard to enforce. Khyentse Rinpoche gave an explanation of Jigme Lingpa’s *Yön Ten Dzö* over one and a half years, teaching every day, using the commentary of Khenpo Yönten Gyamtso and another commentary, and Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö said these commentaries were the key that opened the door of the dharma for him. I recorded these teachings with a broken recorder, and they fill 120 cassettes. For me, the desire to translate was like when you see something very precious, like an incredible landscape, and you want everyone to benefit from it. I thought maybe I would have to spend many years translating these vast commentaries of Yönten Gyamtso, and Khyentse Rinpoche has great patience answering questions. As Tulku Rinpoche has said, we took for granted that in any field, there was no question that he couldn’t answer – and now we realise what it meant. For example, when I was translating the *Life of Shabkar*, there were so many names of places, people and texts, and so many references to colloquial things. When Khyentse Rinpoche was teaching, there were always 20 to 30 khenpos or tulkus there from all schools, so if there was a specific question, there was always someone I could ask. He was surrounded by great scholars. I could always ask and clarify. We can make educated guesses, but then we have no certainty that we’re right. But this approach isn’t translation.

The challenge is to translate the difficult points correctly. We need to establish these points with certainty, and the only way to do that is to have access to someone who knows what they're talking about. And when Tulku Rinpoche was talking about needing 12 years to edit a translation, it was one of mine. I forget my French, and I have never mastered English and Tibetan. That's the challenge. And that's why a common effort is necessary, with those who really know things working together with those who have beautiful language. The ideal lotsawa has both, but nowadays that's hard.

I was going to work on the *Yön Ten Dzö*, with its 2,000-plus pages, as the work of my life. But Khyentse Rinpoche said that the entire second part on Mantrayana was only appropriate for those who've done a three year retreat. I hesitated to do it. And I'm grateful that Padmakara is now translating the commentary. Khyentse Rinpoche was also very strict about transmission, and there was no question that it was essential, especially for tantra teachings like the Guhyagarbha tantra. He'd teach this once a year to a group of 20-50 people, and if even one person had not received the empowerment, he'd give it. And this wasn't a simple empowerment. It took 3 days, with peaceful and wrathful deities and a long empowerment, just for one person. And he'd never refuse to do it. He was adamant about that. We really need to keep this in mind.

There's also a need for access to proper originals, which we now have thanks to Gene. When he was first in India, Gene convinced all those who were selling sweaters to find books and bring them to him. So for 15 years, anything

found in a box somewhere made its way to Gene, and everything valuable was printed. He single-handedly saved the heritage outside Tibet by making it available. That's incredible. But we need to read those books. Sometimes I'll send a box somewhere and then two years later the box is lying there unopened. And in order to avoid the "copper dust" problem, we need deep study and practice. It's not just about knowing the words. We need to be embedded in deep knowledge from reading, study and practice so it's obvious what the meaning is. When Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche suggested I come here, I didn't feel qualified. But I got an email back from Rinpoche saying he won't take no for an answer. So I thought I'd share some memories of our teachers, some of which are related to how we can progress in study, and some anecdotes about the qualities and humility of teachers. As HH Khyentse Rinpoche said, as we can see with the great masters and khenpos, it's only trees with no fruit that rise to the sky. The trees with fruit have branches that bend down, not up. That's a great teaching. We have to do our best each time we start, and check our motivation for our work, and then do our best with the blessings of teacher and the right transmissions.

I was once travelling on a flight to Chengdu sitting next to HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, and Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche was sitting behind me and he put scratching powder on my neck. This wasn't ordinary scratching powder, but a mixture of chilli, scratching powder, and hot pepper – and they laughed so much, and I got red in the face and said, "Do you think it's funny?"

March 20, Morning – Breakout Group: Tools and Resources for Translation

Michele Martin, spokesperson for the breakout group on "Tools and Resources for Translation," reported the group's five-year goals, as well as a list of issues that need to be resolved and some suggested next steps.

What We Want to Accomplish

- **Survey** – of tools and technologies already available, glossaries, dictionaries, critical editions (such as Paldor's diplomatic edition of 8 Chinese Kangyur) (Jake Dalton and Steven Goodman will collaborate on this)
- **Website** to include:
 - **Dictionaries** tailored to our needs
 - **Glossaries**
 - **Lists of Existing Translations** and Translations in Progress
 - **Information on Training Institutes** in the West and Asia, and manuals on training new translators
 - **Peer Review** of sample pages of translations
 - **Glossaries for Readers** – allowing them to navigate non-uniform translation terms
 - **Safe Deposit Box** – a repository for our ongoing work that might not be completed in our lifetime deposited so others could continue it.

- **Links** to Other Resources
- **Translating from Chinese** into Tibetan texts that do not exist in the Tibetan canon.

Issues Needing Consideration

- **Hosting** where and how (Work with David on a separate site, or host at U.Va. This could involve negotiating a free license in perpetuity, not distributable to anyone else, allowing us to use tools developed at U.Va.)
- **Open Source Creative Commons License** – meaning that our work is available for free, but must remain unchanged, be fully attributed, and any further derivative use must adhere to the same conditions.
- **Focus on Where We Add Value** – minimize wherever possible the need to develop our own software, though this likely will become necessary.
- **Summer Conference** – where these issues are discussed (Potential attendees include David Lunsford, Phillip Stanley, Michele Martin, Elizabeth Napper, Jeff Watt, Jake Dalton)
- **Catalogue** listing all Sanskrit texts available
- Dunhuang manuscripts accessible at British Library: www.idp.bl.uk
- Google Books (adhere to the same principle in open source)
- Institutional membership for dissertations and journals

Moving Forward

- As we create the interim administrative structure for the whole project, we should put in place a mechanism for these questions to be properly answered and reported back to a larger body for vetting and confirmation.

(Q) The International Association of Buddhist Universities in May in Bangkok will pull all the Buddhist resources together, and we can link to these outside resources

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) There are also many projects ongoing to digitize the Kangyur, which will also be resources for us.

(Q) In his presentation on BDK, John talked about how to get translations online and searchable – what about doing that with existing translations, which would be a tremendous resource for ongoing translations? Amazon wants to put *Lam Rim Chenmo* online, which will be very useful as you will be able to search it very easily.

(Q) There are questions of copyright, but if people would be willing to offer translations for the site, it would be ideal.

(Q) We spent time discussing the issue Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche raised. What we translate is part of world heritage, and we shouldn't think of it as "my piece". So in terms of copyright, we should think in terms of open source materials now on the web. We should include the names of translators at the end, as was done in the past with Sanskrit and Tibetan masters, but issues of copyright shouldn't stand in the way of these texts being widely available and continually revisable.

(Q) There are many things online, and I can help in locating texts online (idp.bl.uk at the British Library).

(Q) Google Books is potentially another resource, but some publishers aren't sure if they want to release their books there. But e.g. *Recognizing Reality* is on Google Books, and you can search the full text.

(Q) Wisdom Publications was an early adopter of Google Books, and virtually all our books are there. You can view 20% of the interior, and search anywhere in book. Full indices are available. Google will set up a marketplace where you can buy a downloadable version of a book, and Wisdom will participate in that. Wisdom has a mission as a nonprofit to make available the words of the Buddha. But we have to survive, so we function as a business and we need a revenue stream. But as a nonprofit it's our mission to make these texts available as much as we can.

(Q) There are vast resources in all the dissertations done every year and journal articles – people who are affiliated to universities have access to these, and other translators don't. It would be great if this initiative could get a university affiliation so this would be accessible to all.

(Q) There's lots of Japanese scholarship available. It would be good for us to get access to that.

(Q) We are in favour of open source, creative commons – this means our work would be available free, remain unchanged, and be fully attributed, and any further derivatives must adhere to the same conditions. Google Books does not subscribe to that, and that's a very important principle.

(Q) In terms of online publications, the University of Hawaii Press said it's fine for me to put things online, as their understanding, corroborated by other publishers, is that putting things online doesn't undercut the sales of books. The advertising effect counteracts losses. So it's important to convince copyright holders of other translations to allow them to be used in this way. And Chuck Muller said the Digital Dictionary of Buddhism is organised by Chinese headwords, so although it's hard to have Tibetan or Sanskrit words as headwords, he's open to finding ways to include

data from this dictionary project. Also Chuck has a position at the University of Tokyo, and the head of the SAT project, which is the Japanese Buddhist canon project, is a friend of mine. He wrote his dissertation on the *Nirvana Sutra*, and he uses Tibetan sources extensively in his study of Indian Buddhism. Our project has a good possibility of coordinating closely and constructively with Japanese scholars.

(Q) Light of Berotsana has set up a Google group, Lotsawa Forum. There's already a page of resources, and Ken McLeod sent a long list of online resources.

March 20, Morning – Breakout Group: Collaboration with Tibetan Teachers

Wulstan Fletcher, spokesperson for the breakout group on "Collaboration with Tibetan Teachers," reported the following summary notes from the group's discussion.

Our discussion was mainly for translators working outside the academy. We feel it is important to address the issue of translators who do not have easy access to source language experts. We can see three possible approaches to collaboration:

- (1) A lama would give a transmission and commentary in a small group or shedra as a basis for specific translation projects. This is the ideal, but it's becoming more difficult to enjoy. The situation described by Matthieu when lamas like HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche were in the world was a golden age that won't be repeated. Also the question of transmission is important for the Kangyur project, whether we're from the academy or elsewhere. The work should be self-consciously situated in the lineage and people who've taken refuge, etc. The group expressed some anxiety that not everyone interested in translation necessarily shares this view.
- (2) Working with a Tibetan expert, a young bilingual geshe/khenpo/acharya. This person may not be a great lama, but they should be qualified from studies, and hopefully more available than great lamas. This approach is easier to implement, and young translators working with them wouldn't be embarrassed to ask elementary questions.
- (3) Tibetan translates into English and then it is edited by a target language expert (we didn't have time to discuss this fully).

Some other recommendations from the group:

- At least one translator should have knowledge of Sanskrit as well.
- Shedras both inside and outside of Tibet should be included in the project.
- Anes and women should also be included.
- Lamas associated with the conference should pledge Tibetan experts for the project.
- Handling Disagreements: As a rough and general guideline, the source language expert has the final say on meaning issues; the target language native speaker has the final say on expression issues.
- Solving the problem of isolation: Some ideas include partnering over the internet; identification of qualified and willing Tibetan resources (bilingual) (i.e. creating a specific college of translators for this project, and once someone has been admitted to the college, it's a responsibility of the project to find a suitable Tibetan willing to work with the translator).
- Help centre with resident experts.
- An idea for source language guidance for the five-year plan: suggestion that it be the responsibility of the

Tibetan lamas who sign up with the Kangyur project to request the collaboration of Tibetan experts who are under their guidance.

- Setting up the partnering scheme should be a part of the five-year plan.

(Q) From the beginning Nalanda worked with a bilingual lama who knew more words in English than the English-speaking translators did. And he could quote from the Oxford English Dictionary at any point. We developed a methodology where we read every word of our translation to Trungpa Rinpoche, and he was very effective in catching mistakes we made. Having a group collaborating in the same room is very advantageous, although it's very slow. But much of what we translated was practice texts that would be repeated many thousands of times over the years, so we felt it was very important to craft each word. That methodology is very effective in weeding out problems. We keep making mistakes, but thousands of people use our texts so we get letters from them, and it works. I like the model of pandita and lotsawa together, where ideally the pandita is a Tibetan expert. In my experience, the dynamic of three people is so much better than two. It's ideal in my experience to have at least one bilingual person and two other people. The transmission quality of the lama in continuing the whole translation to the target language is very significant, and crafting the English is an element of transmission. The way that Tibetan contains information is very different from English, and putting things into English reveals so much more, whereas Tibetan has a very limited and esoteric containment of knowledge. So how we do that is very crucial.

(Q) We also need training of Tibetan translators. As part of building the plan, part is outreach to Tibetan shedras, schools, LTWA, etc. There are many young Tibetans studying, and this project offers something for them, so drawing on them from the beginning is important.

(Q) Yes, and as we connect to shedras, let's also connect with nuns, and don't forget there are shedras inside Tibet also. Let's collaborate with people from Tibet also.

(Q) It's important that we corner some of the responsible persons here in this regard. I apologise to Rinpoche for proposing this, but we need a commitment from the Tibetans here that there will be availability of Tibetan experts. Translators have struggled for years, and we should include a body that deals with this issue. We hear of great lotsawas who endured difficulties going to India, but the Indian

panditas also endured difficulties leaving verdant Northern India and travelling to Tibet.

(Q) One important thing is that among people who are bilingual, ideally we would also have people who also speak other languages. Then the pandita is talking not only to English speakers, but also to someone who knows Russian, Chinese, German, Spanish, etc. – i.e. other languages, not just English. The British and American empires seem to be ending. And the whole process of determining meaning happens in a group with the original pandita, and if someone doesn't catch it in another language at the same time, that's too bad. We should also collaborate with the Tibetan University in Sarnath. They have all four orders, they are teaching younger Tibetans, and it would be fruitful to involve them. And it's the place where the original turning of the wheel took place, which is very auspicious. It would be a shame to only have these translations come to other languages through English.

(Q) I have a suggestion about the partnering over the Internet. In the same way that it takes time to have a discussion, it takes time for an expert to consider a question, reply to it and so on. I felt embarrassed to take HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche's time, and this will be especially demanding if our expert resources have to face not just a few requests but a whole lot. Whatever structure is organised, we will need a couple of resident people whose job is to reply to hundreds of questions from people, and who will log them. It'll be very useful for translators, and then we'll know we're not imposing, but speaking to someone who has taken on this job willingly (as a "help centre"), and they are remunerated and part of the team.

(Doboom Tulku Rinpoche) Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche strongly emphasised that Sanskrit terms should not be used and English equivalents should be found for every word. That's a very important point – I'm not sure if I agree or disagree – but it's important to debate. Among the group of two or three translators working in partnership, one at least should be knowledgeable in Sanskrit.

(Q) I like the idea of using English words, but going to English is different from going from Sanskrit to Tibetan. Sanskrit is in the same Indo-European family, so it's important to know the root in order to choose the word. So we need Sanskrit panditas as well as Tibetan lamas, but it doesn't mean we should rest with the Sanskrit words. I think that's terrible.

(Q) If we are translating into many languages from the same material, we can record the questions and answers, transcribe them, and then Russian and Spanish translators can have access to them as reference materials. And in terms

of translating everything to English – including the word “Buddha” – to get the meaning of each syllable, I tried it and it doesn’t work well. People are bewildered. So I changed strategy. When Tibetan was translated into Mongolian, Mongols were already familiar with many Sanskrit terms, and we’re in a similar situation. Words like *Buddha*, *bodhisattva*, *sutra* and *tantra* are already well known, so although we should limit our use of Sanskrit, it would be too confusing to have everything in English. And one could always explain in parentheses what those terms mean.

(Q) I want to echo Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche’s comments about doing this in multiple languages at the same time. It’s germane to capture the value of working with tradition holders. This is for the world, and people won’t get these through controlled distribution sources. We’ve been protected until now as Tibetan hasn’t been available in a machine-readable format. But now Unicode is out, and

Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche is entering texts. With Google Search and books now going online, and any language being translated on the fly by a machine and rendered in the target language, search engines will connect to dictionaries and start translating texts, and as Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche said, this will be a disaster. And if we just put out translations in English, the same thing will happen. It’s important we get to the meaning. Buddhism originated in Afghanistan and Pakistan in the Swat valley, and look at what’s happening there today. They have a total misunderstanding of skull cups and necklaces and things like that. It’s critical we do this now, and that our translations can be found on the Internet. And these have to be translations that have the meaning, not translations that use metaphors that were always expressed in combination with a teacher to make sure there was no misunderstanding.

March 20, Morning – Breakout Group: Priority Texts

Tom Yarnall, spokesperson for the breakout group on “Priority Texts,” reported the following summary notes from the group’s discussion.

5-Year Goals

- Identify, locate, and record what texts already have been translated partially or fully; published or not. Assess to determine whether or not they should be prioritized for completion and/or (re)translation/publication
- Quality control criteria based on outcome of summer conference(s) needed first, or in parallel
- Many more scholars needed to draw up this list of priority texts for the first five years (there were only five in our group)

The list below indicates our preliminary identification of important text translation projects that at least should be *begun* (if not completed) in the first five years.

Vinaya

- *Vinayavastu* (*’dul ba bzhi*) — (1st four volumes of Kangyur = 1,223 folios)

Sutras

- *8,000 Prajñāparamita*
- *100,000 Prajñāparamita*
- *Ratnakuta*
- *Lankavatara*
- *Samadhiraja*
- *Avatamsaka* (incl. *Dashabhumika* and *Gandavyuha*)
- *Samdhinirmocana*

Tantras and one Tengyur commentary each

- *Tattvasamgraha*
- *Guhyasamaja*
- *Hevajra*
- *Mañjushrimulakalpa*

Tengyur

- *Ideally* begin the complete works of the Six Ornaments (Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Dignaga, Dharmakirti, Asanga, Vasubandhu)
- *Ideally* begin the complete works of Chandrakirti, Shantarakshita, Kamalashila, etc.
- *Vinayasutra* (by Gunaprabha)

- *Yogacharabhumi* (by Asanga)
- *Buddhapalita-mulamadhyamaka-vrtti* (by Buddhapalita)
- *Vyakhayukti* (by Vasubandhu)
- *Bhavanakramas I, II, III* (by Kamalashila)
- *Avikalpa-pravesha-dharani-tika* (by Kamalashila)
- *Abhisamayalamkara* (by Maitreya)
With *Sphuthartha* (by Haribhadra [Toh. 3793])
- Texts by *Abhayakaragupta* (?)

Gsung 'bum

- Representative *gsung 'bum* texts

(Q) Some texts that are critical to the traditions are already out there. We need to locate them and see if they meet a certain bar. We can combine this with what LTWA and Phil Stanley are doing. We also need to develop training materials to train translators, including an explanation of things like the connotations that certain terms have in Western psychological or scientific terms.

(Q) For translation from the Tengyur, you need some commentaries, and we'd give preference to Indian commentaries – but e.g. for the *Mulamadhyamaka-karikas*, depending on which commentary you follow, you'll get a different translation of the root text. I think it's important to have multiple translations in continuation of the lineage.

(Q) Many works in *gsung 'bums* are commentaries. It's critical that we have a place for people to send things – not just completed texts, but anyone who wants to work on something can say they'd like to work on a certain translation in a certain place with a certain teacher, and they could be put on a list of available personnel. Then a committee could evaluate the ability of the person, the availability of a teacher, etc. and we'd have a global personnel/talent pool. And then perhaps the committee could suggest they might work on something more appropriate. In other words, we need a clearinghouse that captures people's activity and enables them to go where they want to go and do what they want to do. Many things have been translated in many versions, e.g. *Bodhicharyavatara* is in 10 versions.

(Q) Since we're aiming at a sampling of texts, maybe we could think of some texts from each of the three turnings of the wheel. And also some sutras that are often quoted, e.g. the *Parinirvana Sutra*, *Dashabhumika Sutra*, etc. Prioritising texts that are most quoted is a good criterion.

(Q) I propose to do three surveys of: (1) existing materials and translations, (2) work in progress, and (3) what are the lacunae. E.g. for lexical materials, we could then say, "here's something nobody is working on," so we would not

just be a receptacle but able to proactively solicit people to work on things.

(Q) I have a document in Filemaker Pro we could put online and everyone could access. It would be good to have someone to handle all the data coming in. I could structure it, but I'd need a volunteer. You can search in Tibetan or Sanskrit. It contains 15 years of data.

(Q) This is a great example. People should say what they need, then give their requests to our interim caretaker and he'll get it funded!

(Q) In the short term we can use Lotsawa Forum. It's already set up. But we need an administrator.

(Ivy) Let's capture all the nitty-gritty after lunch – you can self-identify as a volunteer, make a pledge or whatever.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) in five years we can produce our first translations, but I'm not giving up my promise to Rinpoche to do as much as I can. I want to do the commentaries and connected shastras as well. And I long to translate Shantarakshita's works as well. I trust our leaders will provide all the necessary tools, etc. and when we see HH the Dalai Lama, we should ask his blessings and thoughts on our suggested priority list.

(Q) In response to Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche, how would we fit a Tengyur root text with commentaries by Tibetan teachers? At Dharmachakra we do that. We have the root text with a couple of Tibetan commentaries – but how would that fit this project? As then it wouldn't be just Indian materials but others as well.

(Q) We could separate them.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) We'd have the root text and then separately we'd have the commentaries by Indian and Tibetan teachers.

(Q) Some of the Kangyur and Tengyur is translated from Chinese to Tibetan, so we need some Chinese speakers in those cases. They are as important as Sanskrit teachers, and we should incorporate this into our fund-raising as well, as it makes everything more inclusive.

(Q) One priority might be to translate texts that are enriched by the wisdom of geshe or Rinpoches that may not be with us much longer. Also, there has been a strong tendency here to talk of Sanskrit/Tibetan, but China is important and there are texts translated from Korean into Tibetan. If this was made a priority, we could enlist support of Korean scholars as well. Getting Chinese and Japanese scholars involved in this project would help immensely.

(Wulstan Fletcher) With regard to Sanskrit terms, I'd like to register my strong disagreement. Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche is my teacher and will punish me later. But the genius of English is its capacity to absorb foreign terms

easily. ‘Microphone’ is a Greek word, ‘video’ is a Latin word, and all sorts of word we think of as “English” are foreign! The eleventh century influx of French into English made English a hybrid language, and for every idea there are words with German or Latin roots. If you confine yourself to words from German as opposed to French and Latin, you’ll have a different feel to the translation. Words like ‘arhat’, ‘samsara’, and ‘Buddha’ are already in the Oxford English Dictionary. Explaining ‘samsara’ would take as long as explaining ‘cyclic existence’. In the Elizabethan age, translation was regarded as patriotic act, a way to bring the richness of words from Latin, Greek, and French into the language. And then there were glossaries of neologisms like ‘image’ and ‘illustration’, which seem so familiar now, but which were new then. It’s easier for English to absorb Sanskrit than Tibetan. And English is much better able to do this than Latin, Nordic or Slavic languages. In French it’s against the law to absorb foreign words.

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) Deciding a list of texts for five years, and the discussion about the Tengyur and how to translate Indian texts without commentarial influence – these are good questions. For translators who work on the Kangyur and Tengyur, it’s important to involve scholars from all four schools. This is a major work, and it’s not beneficial for the work to be done just by a small group. And secondly I appreciate your trust in Tibetan scholars. I must say I’d love to meet some of them. We should also respect the Western scholars who have great knowledge, and sometimes I learn much more from them. It’s important to see the collaboration of both scholars in the source language and scholars in the target language, such as Western scholars who have great knowledge of the particular texts we’re working on.

(Q) I’d highly encourage those still alive to allow a Creative Commons License to post contemporary Tibetan commentaries in Tibetan, even if we don’t translate them. And for *karuna* or *nyinje*, Sogyal Rinpoche wanted a French equivalent, and he used “l’amour tendresse,” and Robert Blythe once said why should we genuflect to Latin versions, and why not to Anglo-Saxon ones like “mother pity” (which originally meant ‘piety’).

(Q) If we’re going to centralise control of translation, we can naturalise words into the English language. For example, people always disagree how to translate ‘klesha’. Is it ‘affliction’ or something else? And it’s now naturalised into English, as in “I’m having a klesha attack,” which goes well with “karma.” If there were words that we as a group decided to make part of English, they would be in the dictionary in a decade or two.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) We should refer to someone knowledgeable as reference – I’d refer to Gene Smith. I consider him one of the most learned Tibetan scholars, and although he doesn’t look Tibetan, I don’t know any Tibetan who has his knowledge of Tibetan sources. And I agree with what Wulstan said, and I wish all readers could understand Sanskrit. But ‘karma’ means two different things in Hinduism and Buddhism, and if we translate it as ‘action’ we have to know what ‘action’ means. I would like to push that when I read an English book, I don’t want the public to have to learn Sanskrit. I want it just in French, English or Russian – just our native language – that’s my wish and I’m going to push for it.

(Q) I supplicate lamas to begin teaching the priority texts we identify. If you teach them, we’ll care about them more, and be able to translate them. We need *lung* and *tri*.

(Q) My database includes catalogues and copyright issues, and I’d like to seek permission to use the eight-volume index from Dharma Publishing and Tarthang Tulku. Marcia has offered to help.

(Q) We postponed haggling over terminology, which is a good idea – but Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche is very right to want to use English and not lazily throw Sanskrit words out. But for names, Tibetan and Chinese don’t do polysyllabic words, and so they translate them. Burton Watson recently translated the *Lotus Sutra*, and the bodhisattvas had names “Little Flower in the Field.” We should keep Sanskrit names. But when we get a catalogue of terms and a style sheet, we can have two or three at first, so we do not fight over ‘samsara’ vs. ‘cyclic existence’ – and the options that are sillier will fall away over time without the need for a smack-down cage fight among translators. There’s no absolute word for anything in any language. Words have life. And translating dharma into English will change English. There’s no word for selflessness in French and Latin languages. ‘Egolessness’ is in the Oxford English Dictionary and cited to Trungpa Rinpoche, but that’s the wrong word, and it makes psychiatrists think enlightened people will need to wear diapers. We shouldn’t think this group is trying to produce one single answer, but rather a catalogue. And all translators should be aware nothing is final, as language will change and connotations will change, so there will be different editions.

(Q) I’m very interested in pursuing the parallel between this project and the Mongol work on Uighur, as here we’re translating something that has already been translated, whereas the translation from Sanskrit to Tibetan wasn’t like that.

(Q) That's why we had so much discussion around the dictionary. You can add oral commentaries online, there's room for etymologies, etc. We're working towards that end.

(Q) Referring to Mongol experience, I have on my website some advice on how to translate from Tibetan into Mongol – we can certainly profit from that experience.

(Q) In the study of iconography, Sanskrit is used now, and it's the only way to allow scholars and practitioners in French, German and Russian to understand what each other is talking about. And for Tibetan terms we use Tibetan

words. The Rubin Museum of Art experimented translating all names of deities and people into English, and this was not successful. In a four-year experiment it wasn't successful, as the visitors, knowledgeable or otherwise, did not accept it. Mañjushri is Mañjushri, perhaps with an explanation attached. And for iconography, we're using Sanskrit.

(Q) Some people say don't use "non-go-through-some" but "impenetrable," which is from the French. Yes, there's incorrect usage of some words – but that's our job, to clarify the meaning of a word and change its usage.

March 20, Afternoon – Message from Jeffrey Hopkins, University of Virginia (video)

I'm very happy to be able to participate in the conference even though I couldn't be there. Evidently with this gathering in Bir there's no place I'd rather be on the planet. But I'm back from a 5-month stay away from Vancouver, visiting too many countries and giving too many talks, and I'm afraid I'd get worn out.

I've been asked to say a few words, but reflecting on the list of the people who are there, I think I have extremely little to offer. Plus the appropriateness of what I might say is diminished by not knowing what you've been saying. In any case, I'm tremendously enthused by the very fact of the week-long seminar of translators. It's a great move forwards, as so many of us have worked individually. As we were saying in Boulder, we have worked as mavericks, though we didn't want to use that word at the time because the US election was about to take place. But that is past, so now we can re-use the word "maverick" – working alone, serving as monarchs in our own work, and deciding what and how to translate. Such seminars and conferences are ways for us to get together and learn, exchange terms, methods and what other people are doing. It's really important, and I hope there are many more both overseas and in places like Vancouver in the future.

In terms of what I have decided to do over the years, it has been to work on Tibetan material and systems that were developed in Tibet, and just about everything I've done has been in that direction. But even though my interest lies there, I think the suggestion put forth to translate in time the whole Kangyur is really marvellous. It certainly has to be done, and the type of vision that's behind mapping this out as one of the projects that translators will do is fantastic and I'm all for it, even though it's not the kind of thing I do. If I did do it, I might choose as a sutra something like the *Lankavatara*

Sutra, as it has two commentaries. I would read the two commentaries but not translate them, and use them to inform how I was doing the basic sutra. Another one would be the *Nirvana Sutra*, and as far as I know there's no commentary, but it's so important that a full translation is needed. If I had any suggestion about how to begin that project, it would be to find at least one person who wants to do one text – if more than that can be done, that's fine. It's crucial that people are thinking in terms of the grand scheme of what can be done. In my own work I made many grand schemes thinking I'd translate the whole of this or that, and it wasn't getting done. And having so many ideas prevented me doing the one or two words that would have started a project.

That may sound like advice, but it isn't. I think it is natural that at any juncture, it's obvious what isn't being done, and therefore what will be done will be different. It's obvious that holes need to be filled and thus the present work drives change in the future. That doesn't mean that the present style of work needs to be transcended. I hope it just means that it just needs to be added onto. Often when we map out a new approach, we or I develop a distaste and derision of how things used to be done. And I have to say I'm guilty of that – I've certainly done that. I think it's part of rebelling against parents so to speak, but it's pretty silly. It has taken me a long time to get beyond it. What I was particularly rebelling against was viewing the study of Tibetan Buddhism as only a way to look at Indian Buddhism. For me Tibetan Buddhism was certainly as a much of a field as Chinese or Japanese Buddhism, etc., so I worked hard in that vein. The other aspect I was rebelling against was not enough consultation with the tradition itself. People were not giving the tradition its voice. And I think people can recognise that almost all of what I've done has been in the

vein of writing in such a way that the tradition itself is given a voice. Now of course one can't exactly do that, but that has been my intention. And so in the process of doing this, I dumped on some people who worked in Tibetan Buddhist studies but didn't do this. Now I'm asking the younger people gathered there in Bir not to do this to me. Don't view your work as replacing what I have done, but adding onto it. In other words treat me the way I have not treated others. And I notice that nowadays translators know enough so that they don't have to make up for their lack of knowledge by shouting at each other. Just before my time there were apparently a lot of shouting matches, which I figure came from not knowing what one was talking about.

What will happen in the future, in general I don't like to try to predict. But if you look at what's happening right now with the production of libraries – not just one library, but collections formulated around different ideas, e.g. a tradition in Tibet, or the great literature of Tibet, or in my own case, I don't know how I'd describe the collection of what I've done. And I think these libraries are wonderful, and when you look at that, it's very forward thinking to have a library that is the Kangyur itself. Each of the different libraries contributes in its own way, and no library or work should be faulted because it doesn't take into consideration something else that is related. I feel very strongly about this. Often in academia, works are faulted and derided because they have holes. It's natural to have holes – how could you do something that doesn't have holes? We need to recognise what holes are, and not pretend they aren't there, as they need to be filled. But to use that as a basis for derision is a mode of behaviour seen often in scholarship throughout the world, and it would be nice if we could do away with most of that. I have to confess in this regard that even though I'm trying hard to appreciate everybody else's work and for the most part I can say that my appreciation comes from the depth of my heart, in some cases I can't even pretend it.

It's helpful to look at single moments in one's life. Recently someone told me how good a recent translation of mine was, much better than the other available translation. And I thought, "Too bad the person couldn't remember who the other translator was so they could put them down." This is a revelation of my own inadequacy of character, but one way people can work together well is to be open about one's own shortcomings, and this will influence others in the conversation to be open about their shortcomings also.

A really great outcome from the conference would be (1) to move ahead on the various projects that people bring up, (2) to spawn various modes of interconnection, such as the sharing of dictionaries. For instance, I get a great deal of help

from the Rangjung Yeshe dictionary, and combined with the THDL dictionary – I couldn't have done some of my recent work without it, I'd still be working on it. And as near as I can see, there are no great barriers to us translators working together, even though I've talked about some of those barriers in myself, I don't see them in our interaction. It's very easy to be non-defensive about what one is doing, the words one is using, and the way people are treating each other is not only very civil, it's very friendly.

There may be a further step in this, which is like Tibetan debate. Many decades back – I was going to say centuries – I was in Dharamsala and joined a class debating the two truths in Madhyamika. And as you know, debate is raucous, and sometimes it's done with ill humour, but for the most part it's done loudly with good humour. And sometimes an Indian would come by and lecture us, "you shouldn't be so angry, this is Buddhist religion, you should have compassion." George Dreyfus was in that class, and we'd often meet and continue our debate, but in English in the same loud, raucous way with big smiles on our face, and go for hours. And His Holiness' younger brother lived a few apartments away down the hall, and we were so loud that he thought we were angry, and he came along a small balcony and looked in the window. He saw us smiling, and explained why he had come. It may be possible for at least some of us to very raucously and vigorously discuss various ideas with a big smile on our faces, but I don't think we need to jump into that mode right away. Nevertheless, I think we should be prepared for it, as it's the tradition from which we come. But maybe a few years of doing things quietly and nicely is good, but certainly not avoiding issues.

Discussion

(Q) How will we implement our vision? One extreme is an organisation that creates and publishes translations under its own imprint exclusively, one that creates and owns everything. In this case we'd have the greatest control, quality, and conformity, but it would be very slow and costly. At the other extreme is an organisation that does no translations, but solely funds other organisations and supports them and provides technical expertise and coordination, guidelines and things like that. And maybe somewhere in the middle is both – an organisation that has an imprint for its own texts, and which provides funding, technical support and coordination to other projects in existence or that come into existence, and which slowly check texts off the list of Tibetan literary heritage. Maybe we help fund and coordinate, or set forward some editorial policies and try and bring other organisations to that level,

and maybe we could share the logo of the ‘Buddhist Literary Heritage Project’ with them.

(Q) You clarified it nicely – there are a number of concerns about different understandings of who we are and what we are doing. These three visions are three different opinions I’ve heard, and we’d like to make sure we get a clear understanding which of those three it is. The middle option seems to be the most prudent. I see it as a meta-level organisation, the guild or association of translators worldwide that would over time agree on a set of criteria on what makes a good translation, which might take some time to work out, and then have some insignia or logo that could be given to anyone’s project – Wisdom, Padmakara, whatever – and this would create the Kangyur and Tengyur library in a quicker way as it would be decentralised, and then only the guild and criteria are centralised. But at the end, it’s diverse looking as there might be 30 different publishers. But each would have that logo. And then in 50 or 80 years, a future group might retranslate everything, in which case it would all look the same. But I don’t think we’re trying at this moment to have that uniformity.

(Q) It would be a pity if it’s a patchwork – the sungbums could be done differently, but otherwise everything should be part of a single imprint. I’d be sad if the Kangyur and Tengyur had different imprints. It would diminish the inspiration to complete it that we get by making it one big common goal. There’s a strength to doing it slowly. So that’s another middle way – integrate the sungbums, but it’s hard to imagine the Kangyur and Tengyur as other than one.

(Q) Speaking as publisher of Nalanda, I advocate the group becoming a publisher eventually and creating a unified publication of at least the canonical works. The middle

ground is easy to advocate, and we need a publications sub-committee and I will volunteer to be on that to articulate what’s necessary. This is too premature, but I can’t help but throw it out. You can do both at once if you have a little common agreement, e.g. on format – say it’s 6x9 – and you collect texts in a common binding, and then Wisdom or someone else can bring out the books.

(Q) People can publish individually under Columbia Press or whatever, but in end we want it all in maroon binding to put on the shrine. We should also be able to reformat texts and publish both ways. And in addition to funding existing groups, we want to fund people directly who are not yet employed in this endeavour – some things are outsourced, and some are in-house.

(Q) This is a great discussion, but not one we can settle this afternoon, and since we’re looking at a 100-year plan, let’s shoot for the working committees that will work on these issues in detail – e.g. publication standards, website, translator training – and get volunteers for people to work on the next steps with Khyentse Foundation.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) I would like to see the whole Kangyur and Tengyur in one series under one umbrella, so everyone can appreciate its beauty, so our organisation will keep it in mind and make it happen. If we have publications, wonderful, and will be useful for reprinting books in future. My father said, “Don’t sell books, and never use a single pecha for yourself. You should re-inject the proceeds into publications; else you’re making hell for yourself.” So I insist that everything from Padmakara is used for more publications, not for translators themselves.

(Q) Let’s move to more concrete areas of getting people to volunteer for jobs and set up the planning commission.

March 20, Afternoon – Project Pledges, Name and Resolutions

(Ivy) Let’s list the things you don’t want to forget. Let’s not walk out without some concrete steps, and anyone can raise their hand and volunteer to take certain things.

(Ane Kunga Chödrön) Tsechen Kunchab Ling is the seat of HH Sakya Trizin in the US, and we offer to translate two major sutras in next five years if the resources can be found to support this work. This is a modification and extension of our previous pledge. The sutras pledged are two among these four: “Completely Accepting the Root of Virtue Sutra,” “White Lotus Sutra,” “Meeting of Father and Son Sutra,” and “Ten Stages Sutra,” and Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltzen prefers

the last two, if Khyentse Rinpoche finds these in harmony with the project’s immediate goals. We will do our best to incorporate the wonderful advice of everyone here, the partnership of two very skilled Tibetans, Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltzen and Paldor, the close advice of Zenkar Rinpoche and Gene Smith, the involvement of the George Washington University religion Department, and the Jawal Nehru Institute of Sanskrit Studies, and we promise to renew our bodhisattva vow and do Mañjushri sadhana every day.

(Thomas Yarnall) I’d like to spearhead a working group to look at training materials as John Dunne presented. We

will have a small working group as early as this summer, and a more comprehensive meeting the following summer to create a preliminary bibliography related to training which we'd then submit to larger group. In one sentence – I'm offering to spearhead and organise a working committee to develop materials for training and evaluation standards for translation, first meeting this summer, with a better-organised meeting in June 2010.

(Steven Goodman) Jake Dalton and I will coordinate initial work on resources and tools, which will be easy as we live in the same city. We'll do this prior to the planned summer institute.

(Catherine Dalton) For translator training, I'll research the programs that exist and methods being used, and my research will be supplemented by people with expertise in canonical translation where I have no expertise.

(Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) Let's catch what we can at this point, then later write our commitments on paper and present them to the organisers, as otherwise this will take forever. I'm not saying that you shouldn't pledge. You should, in front of everyone. And secondly, I want to say I pledged to Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche to do whatever I can to support his work with my limited brain. And also I've discussed with Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche that we have a small Nitartha translation network, and we'll work under his guidance in translating the sutra section of the canon, as the Prajñāparamita and tantra sections are taken.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) This is my job now. I'm already acting like "dear leader" from the North. Since the two sutras are taken, can you start with vinaya? I don't want to waste resources – we have two volumes of sutras pledged, which means you can do two from abhidharma or vinaya. This is just something to consider – I'm not imposing.

(Elizabeth Napper) I'd like to coordinate efforts on the tools and website. As people gather information, I'd be happy to pull it together.

(Jessie Friedman) How should people who are not here get brought along? I have an email list of 200 people – how should they participate in these activities?

(Elizabeth Napper) Why don't Jules and Jessie build the translators' guild, as the natural locus for all translators?

(Jessie Friedman) That implicitly means I can bring this back to all of them? You can volunteer in helping the development of a guild.

(John McRae) I'll contribute XML and Asian connections in Korea, Japan, etc.

(Catherine Dalton) I'm not sure about texts being "claimed." I don't presume to speak for Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche, but I don't presume he'll translate the whole tantra

section. I think different schools have different expertise, and it makes sense for people to contribute according to their expertise.

The group then spent some time brainstorming possible names for this project, and drew up a list of possible names:

Buddha's Words
Buddhist Heritage Project
The Words of the Buddha
Buddhist Literary Heritage Project
Indo-Tibetan Literary Heritage Project
Buddha's Literary Heritage
Classics of India and Tibet
Buddhavachana
Buddhist Canon Translation Project
Voice of Buddha
Voice of the Buddhas
Translating the Words of the Buddha
Buddha Word Translation Project
Buddhanaga
Buddhadharma Translation Project

The group then voted to create a shortlist of three names:

Buddhist Literary Heritage Project
Buddhist Canon Translation Project
Translating the Words of the Buddha

(Q) I feel our name should mention Tibet – we're translating from Tibetan, and we're doing Kangyur and Tengyur and they're from Tibet. It's Tibetan Buddhism we're talking about, and the gift of Tibet. It's a big thing for India – they lost their Mahayana Buddhadharma – and now it's coming back to them in India or Tibet.

(Q) The Tengyur contains Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, sciences, medicine, architecture, linguistics, all kinds of things that aren't literary, and abhidharma is technical. The "literary" is nice, cute but not what we're doing.

(Q) I think literary just means "written".

After a final vote, the group selected the name:

The Buddhist Literary Heritage Project

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) For the time being, I'll handle collaboration with Tibetan lamas.

(Q) Text priorities – is there a group there?

(Larry Mermelstein) Publications and editorial issues is a big topic and I'd like to participate.

(Q) Editorial issues are part of the group looking at standards – but issues of copyright, etc. are separate.

(Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche) When we see HH the Dalai Lama, it would be auspicious to request him to identify priority texts.

(Q) Which texts are done and in which order will be determined based on funding – so we'll have to rely on our leader and his organisation to handle this.

(Matthieu Ricard) I would like to make available 150 volumes of searchable Tibetan texts, many of which are already on TBRC.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) I was thinking since Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche has been so close to His Holiness, I'm hoping he can be the spokesperson.

(David Lunsford) I offer to create a living document to explain who we're working with and what everyone is doing, and it'll also help articulate decisions and how and why they were made.

(Cortland Dahl) I'd like to volunteer to help at the summer institute to help with the translators' training program, and interface with other groups. Also keeping in mind everyone who's not here, I sense the enthusiasm is wonderful to work on specific texts – but we're a small group, and we don't want to have a feeding frenzy. I propose we table this, and volunteer our efforts to translate and let another group decide what we should work on.

(Robert Thurman) I'm volunteering to do the 100,000 sloka Prajñāparamita. People can refuse my volunteering, but that's why I took the 100,000 as nobody will ever take it, as

it's too huge. This work will also involve a review of Edward Conze's 8,000.

(Wulstan Fletcher) Can we include something about stylistic issues? I'll be happy to be involved. This is part of the group looking at editorial issues.

(Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) I mentioned earlier to Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche that the sutra section has 12 volumes, and Tsechen Kunchab Ling has taken two sutras. Since I don't want to waste human resources and time resources, I'm requesting Nitārtha Institute that since two volumes out of your pledge are being done by others, can you add the vinaya. You're so experienced and you have worked with dharma so much. Padmakara has pledged to translate the whole Prajñāparamita, and I do not want to waste your energy.

(Larry Mermelstein) Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche has been key to getting us to agree to translate the Kangyur and Tengyur. Can we request him to be part of our leadership? Also, we need a communications function. We'll need a list of priority texts and pledges, and I'm happy to support that.

(Catherine Dalton) All this volunteering is great, but we need an organisational structure to report to, otherwise it won't cohere.

(Q) During the interim period, Khyentse Foundation has got us this far, so can Khyentse Foundation give us email contact for the temporary contact until Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche can set the whole thing up. Who should we email?

(Cangioli Che) Please send emails to translators@khyentsefoundation.org

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) I'd like to request Alexander Berzin and Steven Goodman to prepare something under auspices of Rinpoche.

(Linda Coelln) In the meantime email me at Linda@khyentsefoundation.org

The group then prepared the resolution that appears at the beginning of this document. While the group was in the middle of this work, there was an enormous thunderclap and a power outage, and a torrential downpour of rain.

March 20, Afternoon – Closing Remarks – Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche

We are just before the closing ceremony. I wanted to say this earlier, but because of my absent mindedness and all that, I couldn't really concentrate, as so many things were going on in my mind. I thought maybe some people might have the impression that because we have some pledges to translate certain parts of the Kangyur, that those portions are

“owned” by this group of translators or lineage holders or whatever, and I want to tell you this is definitely not the case. The words of the Buddha have no owner. They belong to everyone.

I'm still digesting the fact that these lamas and also this afternoon that you have actually pledged and volunteered to

do many things. I know the Rinpoches and you are all stretched, and you are really working with minimal resources, and you have so many things to do, but you've offered all you have. It's similar case with Khyentse Foundation, even though this conference is kind of facilitated by Khyentse Foundation. Especially as facilitators, we would like to have many more owners, not only Khyentse Foundation, but we're going to call Tsadra Foundation, Kangyur Rinpoche's Foundation, and maybe even – I don't know if it's realistic – the United Nations, as this is part of world heritage.

First, I'd like to ask all participants to give a really big hand to Ivy. She has facilitated many business institutions, but I can confidently tell you, Ivy, that what you have done these few days is probably the biggest gift you can give to future sentient beings. Ivy perhaps skilfully managed to keep us focussed on things like 'What', 'Who' and 'How'. I think as far as the 'What' is concerned, we set up our vision over 100 and 25 years and all that was very inspiring and courageous, and I think that's how it should be. As Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche and Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche have reminded us, compassion and bodhicitta is like our breath. Chandrakirti said in his *Madhyamakavatara*, "compassion and bodhicitta give birth to the bodhisattva, nurture the bodhisattva and then become the fruit referred to as the Buddha." Therefore the fundamental policy of this group, the Buddhist Literary Heritage Project, will be – and has to be – the policy of bodhicitta. As I've already stated in my opening remarks, Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche inspired the translation of the Kangyur, so he has already planted the seed of this great vision. Thank you Rinpoche, for planting this seed for us. It is a really incredible opportunity to accumulate merit.

When I first thought about this conference, I only had a vague idea about it. And when I read and thought about the title "Words of the Buddha," it was more in the sense of the dharma, not the Kangyur. Maybe it was subconsciously there, but not consciously. But since our first day together, not only the Rinpoches – and this is the surprising bit – but also most of you expressed a very strong wish and aspiration to translate the Kangyur and Tengyur. And I must say that if this wish is not bodhicitta it's at least close. Because bodhicitta is one of the greatest visions, there's no greater vision than the vision of bodhicitta, and our task for 100 years is along those lines. It's very big. Some people like myself only vaguely realise how important this job is. But during this conference the importance of translating the Kangyur and Tengyur have become more vivid and obvious. And even just the fact that we've realised the urgency of

translating the Kangyur and Tengyur – that alone I'll take as a fruit. We've been really inspired by many of you, and by the persistence of Ane Kunga Chödrön, and that is bodhicitta. During one break, Professor Alex Berzin approached me with a sincere face and lots of exclamation marks all over his face, said to me in a serious tone "After the completion of all these texts, they should be available to everyone free of charge." And I must say what a wonderful thought. If this thought is not bodhicitta, it has to be something close. I like the fact he mentioned the word "completion of translation." It's really touching to hear comments about completion, as this must mean people like him believe this will be completed. It was such a big vision, I almost dared not think about completion, but thank you Alex, as you have given me a little more courage and I have to confess you have put me to shame a little for not having that courage, as a Rinpoche, to even think about completion.

If our goal is worldly gain and fame or whatever, if our vision is basically short-term, focussed on achievements of this life, we all know we'll do much better by translating romantic books, suspense thrillers, and erotic books. That would serve the purpose much better. Several Rinpoches mentioned how I dragged them into this conference, and I'd like to say I'm not sorry that I've done this. And I'd like to say that I intend to do it repeatedly, and not only the Rinpoches – I'm prepared to drag in the lineage holders and heads of the lineage if it's necessary, and it is really necessary. Also I'll also drag in khenpos, lamas, scholars, sponsors, whoever. If I'm not mistaken, I read somewhere in sutras – please correct me – that if one wishes to repay the kindness of Lord Buddha, the most supreme way is hearing, contemplating, writing, reading, keeping, and even touching dharma texts. And of course, imagine translating – making these texts available to people who otherwise would not have this kind of opportunity to explore this world of wisdom and compassion. I think it's really worth it. This is all the "what."

As for the "who," as if our infinite ignorance is not enough, for centuries we human beings have stubbornly created systems called organisation and governance and all that. So much so that we almost don't know how to live for even one day without depending on organisation, planning, scheduling and so forth. So I guess we have no choice but to have some sort of governing body for this daunting and yet miraculous task. To set up this, I think we have already done quite well this afternoon, but I have nowhere else to go to than lineage heads, lamas, scholars, practitioners, and translators of course – especially the Rinpoches and translators gathered here today. I know many of you have already pledged a lot already. But I want to say please be

patient when I start to call you and haunt you and chase you, because somehow it looks like a successful coup has been staged. And when I call upon you I won't take any answer that says "no." And as a follower of the Buddha, you have no choice but to say "yes."

Every organisation needs some kind of slave, and even this slave seems to require some kind of quality. And yesterday you listed a few qualities. And if I just pick up one of these qualities, that of trustworthiness, I really wonder if any of you did your homework before you appointed me as the caretaker, because I am probably one of the most unreliable and untrustworthy people. And this is not an exercise of humility. It is a partial disclaimer. As a Rinpoche myself, someone who has had the title "Rinpoche" forced upon him under the pretext of compassion towards sentient beings and all that, I have already unwillingly inherited a lot of responsibilities, as some of you may know. On top of that, as a worldly being I have a lot of things I want to do that aren't necessarily wholesome. So when you place me in this situation, of course it's not the best news for someone who wants to catch up with football, who wants to write and make movies, and who basically loves leisure. I guess I have to think in terms that you're all here to rescue me from this kind of lethargy. I don't want to say I'm honoured. Reluctantly I want to say thank you for giving me the opportunity to make merit... reluctantly, as there are many personal reasons.

So please Rinpoches and all participants, not only translators, but also cooks, sweepers, everyone – please pray so that if at times, as Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche said, I successfully manage to tap the merit of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas that this won't cause the swelling of my head. Please pray that I will have bodhicitta when I undertake this project so I won't be carried away by all kinds of personal agendas. Please pray that I won't be discouraged by unfavourable circumstances. Please pray that when things get stagnant that I won't give up. Lastly, I want to thank Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche for chairing this conference, which I'd like to think has been almost like a landmark. Without him and the other Rinpoches here, we would not have been able to create this atmosphere, the specific

atmosphere that we Tibetans care about, words of Buddha in non-Tibetan languages. Please Rinpoches live long and be healthy so I can call you again and again. And towards all of you translators, I really have so much appreciation. Without you, basically there would be no conference. As I said at the beginning, thank you for what you have done until today. I request you to never stop translating – not only in this life, but please think of being reborn as a translator, as we have a 100 year vision. And I'd like to say I'm not the only one thanking you. I think I have quite a bit of support from all over the world thanking you the translators. Over 11,000 people around the world have written messages to show their gratitude. These are all the messages, and you can read them at your leisure.

Rinpoche unrolls part of a very long document containing all 11,000 messages, and reads one:

"Without you, we couldn't practice or study the Dharma, so we are hugely grateful for your incredible gift to us. May your current deliberations in Bir, India, bring the Buddha's words and teachings to countless beings."

I'd also like to thank all the sponsors, and I'm going to single out Wayne Tisdale who sponsored this conference. If you see him, he looks like he's caught in a time warp, somewhere in Utah or Texas – a complete American cowboy. We invited him, but unfortunately because of the current situation he couldn't come. And I'd also like you to remember Mr. Chow from Hong Kong who passed away. He also contributed a lot to this conference and matters of translation. And I'd like to thank all the other sponsors and sponsors-to-be. Some of you are here, and like the Rinpoches and the participants, I will be knocking at your doors. I'd also like to thank Cangioli Che. This translation conference would not have happened without her devotion to the Buddha, dharma and sangha, and her tireless diligence to the work of the Khyentse Foundation. And I'd also like to thank all the other people who put so much effort into making this conference possible. And last but not least, I thank Mother India, the one Mother India who hosted this heritage. Of all the amazing places like Ipanema, Cape Town and Byron Bay, Buddha chose to come here. So thank you India.

March 20, Afternoon – Closing Remarks – Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche

I don't want to take up too much time, so basically I'd like to thank you all for coming here to this wonderful gathering, which I think has been a very historic conference

on translating the words of the Buddha. Thank you very much for coming here and participating in a very active and substantive way, as you were not only participants who just

came to another conference, but you were passionately involved in all our discussions, even talking for 15 minutes or longer just to choose one word. You're extremely passionate and I rejoice in that. That's what we need – the participation of a very active group of translators, scholars, great lamas and Rinpoches. Thank you for your participation, words of wisdom and advice, and the attention you paid to crafting the 100, 25 and 5-year goals. It has been very beneficial and I'm sure all of your suggestions, advice and resolutions will be translated into action under the direction of Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche. On behalf of all of us, I'd like to thank Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche for accepting the leadership role for this project. I know it's not an easy decision or easy task, and it's something none of us really want – I'm speaking for myself – so I'm happy he has volunteered, or that we managed to make him volunteer. The fact that he has accepted this shows the enormity of Rinpoche's bodhicitta.

Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche told us the story of the chicken-keeper and her sons making aspiration in Boudhanath and arriving in Tibet, and in a similar way we have all coming together to ask and beg Rinpoche to lead us and placed him in this position to accept. It's not an accident; it's not something we managed to do. It's a much greater force driving this, which must come from his aspiration, and maybe from our aspiration too. Thank you for all your participation and Rinpoche's participation. And it doesn't mean we can take off this heavy load and give it to Rinpoche and then go home to beach and tan ourselves. That's not the case. We asked Rinpoche to do something for us, to do a favour for us. We asked him to lead, which means we must support his leadership and organisation, so once again I want to remind you all and thank you all for your pledges, and I'd like to ask you to continue to pledge. You have emails, so please don't be shy to write to Khyentse Foundation about whatever more you can pledge in support of Rinpoche's leadership.

The words of the Buddha, the Buddhist canonical scriptures, are an extremely sacred object of faith and respect, and at the same time they are not just religious objects – they are source of great wisdom for the world. That's why we've talked of them as a world heritage of wisdom. So I hope this project will go in the direction of the preservation of world wisdom and wisdom of Buddha that came from India and Tibet to the West. HH the Dalai Lama

has often said Buddhism is a science of mind, and the words of Buddha are mainly concerned with the sciences of mind. Even though there are religious aspects to Buddhism that have been expressed throughout the centuries in different cultures, in essence it's a science of mind. It's a world heritage we must preserve, continue and share in all languages. I hope this project will continue as science of mind, and that we will put together a great infrastructure that's scientific and of a high standard, and that our translation work is collaborative. I hope it'll be something we will be able to take pride in, and something at the highest standard we can deliver in the world of translation. That's my aspiration.

Once again thanks to Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche for putting this together and chairing it, since I didn't do much except take that chair and sit in it throughout all the work. Thank you for allowing me to contribute whatever I did. And this will be done under the guidance of all lineage masters of all schools, so I don't think we need to worry, and I have full confidence that Rinpoche's leadership will be fair, and have high standards. Thank you and I wish you the best for your travels.

(Ivy) The facilitator has the last word. I want to add my personal thank you. I'd like to express my deepest gratitude to Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche for allowing me to facilitate. I've always been happy to be born as a woman, and I'm happier as I think you chose me because of that. I also want to thank all the Rinpoches in the room for giving us precious teachings during these five days, as well as for allowing me to treat you as equal participants. And to each of you in the room, I'm grateful to have been here with you. You've done such marvellous work, and I think I've fallen in love with this sangha. Thank you.

For the closing dedication, Venerable Agacitta from the Burmese Forest Tradition read some verses from the Pali, and Raji Ramanan chanted some verses in Sanskrit from the tenth chapter of Shantideva's Bodhicharyavatara, ending with:

*And now as long as space endures
As long as there are beings to be found,
May I continue likewise to remain
To drive away the sorrows of the world*

March 20, Afternoon – Press Conference

Q: Why is it important that this meeting happened now?

A: (Jakob Leschly) 2500 years ago someone attained awakening, and here we're not consolidating a cultural relic or translating religious scriptures – but because the wisdom of the Buddha is timeless, we're bringing these teachings to the present world. These teachings are not about a religious person who we ask to confirm us. The Buddha taught awakening, and for 2500 years, following his path, individuals have attained awakening. The Buddha challenged us. And the teachings have come down because they not only exist as a living tradition but they have a canonical basis. All Buddhist cultures have numerous ways of presenting this path to freedom, but their core is the words of the Buddha we're planning to translate here, the Kangyur.

A: (Matthieu Ricard) Why now? These teachings have been available in Buddhist countries, but until now there has not been a big enough or capable enough gathering of inspiration and leadership in other world cultures. We haven't had people ready to devote 30 or 40 years of their life to master those languages, or enough interest for this task to be considered. But now we have masters who can elucidate the meaning, and a strong enough group of translators to take on the task.

A: (Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) Why now? Because nobody is doing it.

A: (John Canti) Now we are at a point of convergence. In the past, up to now, we haven't had the capability of tackling this enormous task. And secondly there's urgency from the other direction. It's almost too late. Texts in the Buddhist tradition aren't simply places where you find a lot of information that you access by reading. They're a skeleton on which the oral teachings and transmission are hung, so to speak, and now we have still have extraordinary masters capable of using the texts to explain everything they mean. If we have to wait longer, there will be fewer such masters.

A: (Matthieu Ricard) Intentionally or not, there has been a cultural genocide in Tibet. We all thought this wouldn't happen. But while this tradition is still alive, we should do this work – there may not be this opportunity in the future.

A: (Wulstan Fletcher) Around the world, there are so many problems caused by religion – hatred, intolerance, fundamentalism – and the Buddhadharma, although it has religious aspect, is about something more fundamental than religion. It's a science of the mind. It's something that brings peace. So I think to make the words of the Buddha available now will be a precious source for pacifying the terrible troubles of humanity.

Q: Do you feel there's any danger in translating the entire Buddhist canon into English?

A: (Jake Dalton): It's time for Buddhism to take root in a new land, and English is my language. If Buddhism can be compared to a tree, the Kangyur is root, the Tengyur is trunk, and there are lots of fruits and leaves. Until now, we've primarily been translating the fruits and leaves, but after a time they become scattered, and nothing holds them together. In going to the Kangyur we are going back to the root, taking a cutting, and planting it in a new land. This will allow a new tree to grow, then new branches will grow, and new fruit will be born.

A: (Matthieu Ricard) The only danger is if all 300 volumes fall on your head, but maybe it's a good way to die.

Q: How will nuns with PhD's play a role in the future of translation?

A: (Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche) You are asking about the role of female geshe? We had many discussions on training a new generation of scholars and translators, including Western monastics and nuns. It's part of our whole process and 100 year vision. We not only need to worry about translating, but also training scholars who can support the translation. So I'm sure there will be a big role for nuns in the translation of the Kangyur. Recently there have been many conferences about the full ordination of women in the vinaya, and I think that in the next three or four years they will have a resolution on the full ordination of nuns.

A: (Matthieu Ricard) In these three days, you have noticed there was a voice of women – nobody in this conference felt something was missing from that side. And for translators, there may be more women than men. I don't think this is an issue in terms of this project.

A: (John Canti) I wonder. It seems that geshe-mas are excluded from some traditional teaching activities, and perhaps the work of helping translators might be a role that would help them demonstrate their learning and capacities that would eventually get a lot of recognition.

Q: What about secret teachings? When teachings become widely available in English and on the web, and people search for "Buddhism" and find things about drinking blood and dead bodies that were previously secret, what will the effect of that be?

A: (Jake Dalton) Anyone who travels to Tibet will see murals of all this on public display. I don't think seeing it in books will be much of a surprise to anyone who has any exposure to Tibetan Buddhism. The atmosphere of this conference is one of universality and generosity of spirit, and

making the dharma available to everyone, rather than withholding certain parts for certain people. Other people may disagree with me but that seems to be the spirit of this enterprise.

A: (John Canti) Some of the important lamas have expressed the importance of trying to maintain as much as possible the traditional safeguards against putting in the public marketplace, as it were, teachings that are difficult to interpret, and which could lead to misunderstanding. It would be fair to say we haven't fully dealt with that question. There should be a way that texts that are traditionally restricted could be distributed to all who need them, as long as the recipient has fulfilled preliminary qualifications first. But there's no present mechanism for that. But it would be better to have authenticated translations available, rather than let people's fantasies proliferate without being counteracted.

A: (Matthieu Ricard) This has happened with iconography. The best way to pre-empt confusion is with a clear explanation, as in the book on wrathful deities by the Rubin Museum. I have tried to explain that wrathfulness isn't about anger and even less about hatred, but rather an exacerbated form of compassion. It's like a mother seeing her child about to be hit by a car: she'll push people away to save the child. This will help misunderstanding. But if lineage holders decide these teachings should come into public domain, the fact that this group is doing the translations authentically should ensure there are clear explanations to defuse the grossest misinterpretations

A: (Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) I think explanations are always necessary. We need hearing and contemplation, especially hearing as Lord Maitreya emphasised. Without hearing, no matter what the topic is, not necessarily Buddhism, there will be confusion. For example, if you show a picture of Jesus in the middle of Tibet, people will wonder what is this man hung on a cross and tortured? It won't inspire them. Some kind of explanation is necessary. And it's for those with capacity to understand. Having said this, sometimes you encounter masters like HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche reading dzogchen texts to cows and birds and all kinds of animals, or perhaps in airports. I once asked him,

isn't this secret? And he said, because of people's lack of merit, the teaching has an in-built, natural self-defence mechanism, which naturally keeps it secret. And from a practitioner's point of view, Patrul Rinpoche also said that even if something really puts off someone, let's say it's a picture of a skull garland or whatever, then just because of that seemingly negative connection, this person will eventually reach the end of samsara.

A: (Wulstan Fletcher) Buddha said he doesn't have a closed fist. All his teachings are open to everyone. Someone talks about restricted teachings, but they are not secret because teachers are hiding something shameful. They're open to everyone, but one needs to be prepared. If one is willing to go through preparation, everything is open. If you put everything on the web, it's not helpful, and it'll have to be made clear this text won't help you if you haven't done the necessary preparation.

A: (Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) It's like hiding Listerine mouthwash from babies.

Q: Are you optimistic or not for future of Tibet?

A: (Wulstan Fletcher) I'm not optimistic. I think Tibet has been lost. Tibetan dharma has survived by some miracle in exile. But China won't change, and now they've found minerals and oil, they won't let Tibet go. If there is some change in China there may be hope.

A: (Matthieu Ricard) One of the fundamental Buddhist concepts is impermanence. When things are as bad as they can be, impermanence can only bring something better. There's bound to be change in China as well. People can't be kept under oppression forever. In Mongolia it took 70 years, but there was some change. Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö said the joyful feast of dharma would again be enjoyed in Tibet. Today there's persecution, martial law and terror, but there have to be better times ahead.

Q: What is the name of this project?

A: (Cangioli Che) As an interim choice: "Buddhist Literary Heritage Project," but I must emphasise that everything is interim at this point.

March 21, Morning – Audience with HH the Dalai Lama

(His Holiness) Tashi Delek!

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) Here are all the participants from the translation conference "Translating the

Words of the Buddha," and we'd first like to thank your Holiness for the message that you have given us, and secondly we'd like to submit the results of our conference.

We made resolutions and plans for the next 5 years and 25 years, and within 100 years we would like to translate the words of the Buddha, the commentaries of the great panditas, and also all the commentaries and writings of all the great Tibetan masters. Thirdly, we'd very much like to request His Holiness for guidance. Without your blessings and your guidance, this work will not be completed and respected. Therefore we have come here to seek your guidance and advice. Fourthly, the participants here would like to request your Holiness to give them a blessing through transmissions of mantras such as Mañjushri and Chenrezig.

(His Holiness) That's not necessary!

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) Here we have participants from all over the world, and from all the different lineages.

(His Holiness) Very good.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) And Cangioli Che would like to submit our plans and resolutions. She is the Director of Khyentse Foundation, who organised this conference.

(His Holiness) Thank you.

So firstly, I want to express my appreciation. You all have, I think, a keen interest in Buddhadharma and particularly Tibetan Buddhadharma. And you don't only have a personal interest, but you're dedicated to translation. That means something intended for a wider audience. So I appreciate that. According to the Tibetan experience, for several centuries the work of translation was carried out quite successfully. At that time, facilities were very difficult, but in spite of that, these wonderful translations were made in the past. And now in modern times, facilities are much better. We can have computers and such things, so this work is much easier.

And I think you already know my views. I believe that in the twenty-first century, despite a lot of material development and facilities to support us and help provide us with a happy, joyful and meaningful life, there are limitations to having only material values and material development. So all major religious traditions still have an important role today. That's clear. And one clear indication is that many people have some kind of interest about inner values, and so we have seen the emergence of some strange religions like the New Age and things like that. But this means there are people who are not completely satisfied with material values, and so they are seeking some inner values. People are really seeking something. And some other people might be quite clever at taking advantage of that opportunity. But under such circumstances, the Buddhadharma certainly has a

similar role to play in this century. Among the different traditions, I think all the major religions have the same potential to help humanity. But for those people who are generally a little sceptical about religion, and who aren't easily convinced about God or such things, then Buddhism can help. Even among Buddhists who have a keen interest in Buddhism, there are still many who are sceptical about next life.

In such a period I think certainly Buddhism may have greater potential to help such people, who love reasons and explanation. For such people, I think the Buddhist approach is suitable.

The Buddhadharma is founded on the Pali tradition and the Sanskrit tradition. The Pali tradition is the foundation of Buddhadharma, no question. It's wonderful. All the essential teachings are there. However, whether Buddha himself taught them or not is a different question. Obviously saints like Nagarjuna, Dignaga, Dharmakirti and many of the great masters presented the Buddha's teaching through reasoning and through logic. Therefore I think these teachings are very relevant to today's world, where many people are sceptical about religion. Sometimes I describe Buddhism as something that can be like a bridge between radical materialism and spirituality. I cannot say 'radical spirituality', but rather spirituality that is based on faith. If you ask further questions, then they will say there is something inexpressible and inconceivable. Of course the general presentation of Buddhism is not that way. All the great masters try to make things clear through reasoning that is based on our own experience. The other day some Tibetan students were debating downstairs in the main temple, demonstrating a dialectical debate. At that time, in front of HH Sakya Trizin and HH Karmapa Rinpoche and all the important leaders, I said that maybe it's now worthwhile for us to think about the use of similar techniques of debate applied not to traditional Buddhist topics, but to modern subjects. The masters writing from the fourth to the eighth centuries picked up examples and subject matter relevant to those times. Now times have changed, so maybe we can use the same methods, but with different subject matter, for example to subjects that are currently important, including economics. My belief is that Buddhadharma in general, particularly the Nalanda tradition, is very relevant to today's world.

Then came the Chinese translations, which are even earlier than the Tibetan translations. They are very ancient translations. And then came the Tibetan translations. Between these two, according to some scholars the Tibetan translations are more precise or authentic. So we can translate from Tibetan and also we have opportunity to

further check those Tibetan translations. Some of the past scholars occasionally mentioned that even among the writings of some of the past Tibetan masters, you find that some translations are hard to understand and others don't flow so well and don't really carry the matter so accurately and so forth. Such comments are there.

There are also scholars who believe the translations are a little mistaken in places. So we can now check those Tibetan texts for which the original Sanskrit text is still available. I think there's not only work to translate from Tibetan to English, but also to re-check those ancient translations so that existing Tibetan translations can be improved. In future, you should include representatives from the Central Tibetan University for Higher Studies at Varanasi, as they are already doing some retranslation from Tibetan into Sanskrit. It is believed that there are six commentaries on the Guhyasamaja, and the one known as "The One Requested by the King of the Devas" has not been translated into Tibetan, apart from a few verses. There are quite a number of such texts that have yet to be translated into Tibetan. And in the Chinese translation, there are some texts that are not available in Tibetan translation. And similarly, there are some texts available in Tibetan but not in Chinese. So here also some translation projects can be undertaken. And there are also some texts available in Pali and not completely translated into Tibetan. So there's a lot of work to do.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) the conference also brought up the need to translate from Pali to Tibetan and Chinese to Tibetan in order to complete the Tibetan.

(His Holiness) Very good.

So this task is not easy, and it may take several generations. We Tibetans have now been refugees for 50-60 years. Although such a big task will take generations, this is the right time to start. Then when my generation goes, then there will be younger people who will follow and carry this sacred task. This generation needs to start and they will follow. If they don't care, then it doesn't matter. We will have done our best. Apart from this I have nothing to say, as I am not a specialist.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) We all seek your guidance and support for this project. It is so important that all the people in the world need to respect us, and for this we need your guidance. We'd like your guidance on which texts we should translate first.

(His Holiness) I think as far as Tibetan Buddhism is concerned, the root texts all come from India. So in Tengyur, these root texts are there. I think that is better than Tibetan commentaries. Of course, the works of individual Tibetan

lamas are wonderful, but all their different commentaries are based on the original Indian texts. And when we perform these translations, there's no need for a red hat, yellow hat, blue hat or anything like that, whereas for the Tibetan lamas' texts, you need to take the different hat colours into account. I think these should come later. And individual organisations and individual people will conduct various individual translations, but it may be better for a bigger body like this to concentrate on the Tengyur, as that's the root text.

(Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) We decided in our resolution that we will begin with Buddha's words, and at the same time the commentaries from the Tengyur and commentaries by the Tibetan masters. Every year, Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche suggested we should translate a couple of volumes of Buddha's words, and then also the Tengyur, and the commentaries.

(His Holiness) Very good. Usually I have the feeling that Tibetan masters' writings were written in Tibet, so their main audience is obviously Tibetans. And among Tibetans, there are generally no non-Buddhists. So the lama or writer takes for granted that his writings are meant for Buddhists. Whereas in their writings, Nagarjuna, Shantarakshita and Chandrakirti never take for granted that their audience is only Buddhists. That's a big difference, and you can see differences in the way the Buddhadharma is presented. For example, Shantideva's *Bodhicharyavatara* is primarily dedicated towards one's personal practice, but during his presentation there's quite often some sort of argument involved, as his audience was made up of different faiths. Whereas Tibetan lamas and masters take for granted that their audience was Buddhist, so the way that they present this is a little bit different.

(Robert Thurman) During the conference, Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche said something I thought was very interesting, and I wonder what you think about it. He said that to translate Kangyur and Tengyur very energetically in a way that unifies the different translators today would be very helpful in preserving Tibetan culture. Usually we tend to think that translation is our own selfish thing, getting the treasures from Tibet into English, but he was saying that in countries like Bhutan for example, where he sometimes lives, the younger generation of Bhutanese are educated in English. This is also true for Tibetan refugees. So it may help them to encounter their own shastras and sutras and philosophical knowledge in English, because in Tibet people are used to just having faith and going to the lama, and not being educated. Only the monks are educated. Do you think that this is a correct idea, that translating could even help Tibetan culture?

(His Holiness) Without question. I often tell young Tibetans that if they cannot easily understand Tibetan, then they should read English translations. Now even my own brother uses both texts. He reads the Tibetan, and sometimes when it's a little difficult to understand the meaning of certain terminology, then he reads the English. He compares the two, and finds it very useful. There are also some people, for example in Ladakh, Sikkim and maybe in Bhutan, who I would say are a little bit narrow-minded. And although they have the Kangyur and Tengyur in Tibetan, and consider the Tibetan language authentic, for some nationalistic reasons they prefer to use to use their local dialects. So I often tell people from Ladakh and Sikkim that if they try to use Tibetan script according to their own dialect, it's OK. It's good. But it's impossible to translate the Kangyur and Tengyur into their own native languages. It's impossible. Tibetan words have been fixed now for a few centuries, so they are easy to understand. But if you translate these texts into their local dialects, then it's difficult. So therefore this kind of translation project is also very helpful for preservation of Tibetan Buddhist tradition.

Q: Can you give us some guidance in translating tantric materials from the Kangyur and Tengyur? You have previously written that normally it's inappropriate to publish tantric texts, but nowadays there's so much misinformation that it's better to put out an authentic translation and commentary. Does that apply to all the tantric texts of the Kangyur and Tengyur, or are there restrictions where we should not publish something? It's my feeling that if something is published and you try to restrict it, it will get out anyway.

(His Holiness) The Kangyur and Tengyur are already there. Some Tibetan commentaries should be kept as confidential, and some are even restricted from being produced in print. One of the Tibetan prints even includes a wooden block that states this text is not supposed to be produced with wooden prints. So I think for Kangyur and Tengyur there's no problem. The tantric texts in Kangyur and Tengyur are already available.

(Robert Thurman) But some of the shocking statements need some commentary. Like "kill your father and mother".

(His Holiness) We can do that in footnotes. In the root tantra of Guhyasamaja, it mentions, "If you kill a group of tathagatas then your merit will be accomplished in complete form." And in the commentarial text of the Guhyasamaja, there's the interpretation of what this means. In this context, "killing the tathagatas" refers to the specific context of the

generation stage and the completion stage. So we can put that as a footnote.

(Matthieu Ricard) We resolved that in 25 years we'll complete the whole Kangyur and as much as possible of the Tengyur.

(His Holiness) So during the next 25 years the emphasis will be more on the Kangyur?

(Robert Thurman) We're already doing the Tengyur at Columbia. We're already working on it there, but we want to work together.

(His Holiness) Of course the Kangyur is again something like root text. But for study, for example with the Prajñaparamita, I think the Tengyur is better. There's a danger that we will hardly be able to understand what's there in the Kangyur if we don't translate the Tengyur alongside the Kangyur and depend on the interpretations from the Tengyur. For example, without depending on the teachings on emptiness as explained by Arya Nagarjuna, we can hardly get the gist of the points in the Kangyur. And there's another danger that people might read the Kangyur directly and not get anything out of it, and then they might think, "what's the point of all these Buddhist teachings?" And for example we need to rely on Arya Nagarjuna and Chandrakirti's interpretations on the second turning of the wheel and the teachings on the Prajñaparamita and how these relate to the Buddha's intentions in the third turning of the wheel. We need their commentaries to be able to distinguish which parts of the Buddha's own teachings are emphasised in the view of the mind-only school and which in the Madhyamika view. Without being able to rely on these commentaries, we can get confused if we simply read the Kangyur¹.

Q: Your Holiness, do you think that translators require a lung for the various texts they translate?

(His Holiness) I don't think so. I think more important is sincere motivation. Even with lung, wrong motivation is bad. And we don't have the transmission of the complete Tengyur, so this is a problem.

Thank you.

¹ The 25-year goal was revised after the audience with HH The Dalai Lama. In accordance with his advice, and after email consultation with the program participants, the word 'many' was replaced by the word 'related', so the final 25-year goal is: "To translate and make accessible all of the Kangyur and *related* volumes of the Tengyur and Tibetan commentaries."

Bka' 'gyur Genres: Number of Texts, Pages and Text Size – D. Phillip Stanley, Naropa University

Note: The Combined *Kanjur & Tanjur* (CKT) consists of all texts found in the Peking, Cone, Derge, Urga, Narthang, and Lhasa *Kanjurs*, as well as the Peking, Cone, Derge, and Narthang *Tanjurs*. The CKT page data is stated in equivalent number of Peking pages.

The Bka' 'gyur Sutra Genres: Number of Texts by Genre							
Genre	Peking	Cone	Derge	Urga	Narthang	Lhasa	Combined
Number of Bka' 'gyur Sutra Texts							
'Dul ba	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Sher phyin	17	17	23	23	23	23	23
Paritta	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Phal chen	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
dKon brtsegs	49	49	49	49	49	49	49
mDo sde	267	263	266	268	272	273	279
Myang 'das	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total Sutra	356	352	361	363	367	368	374
Number of Bka' 'gyur Tantra Texts							
rGyud	454	456	472	466	394	425	482
rNying rgyud	18	18	19	19	18	18	19
Dus 'khor 'grel bshad	N/A	N/A	1	1	N/A	N/A	1
gZungs 'dus	266	266	245	254	8	1	267
sMon lam	18	18	20	20	N/A	N/A	26
Total Tantra	756	758	757	751	420	444	795
Total Bka' 'gyur	1,112	1,110	1,118	1,114	787	812	1,169

The Bka' 'gyur Sutra Genres: Number of Pages by Genre *							
Genre	Peking	Cone	Derge	Urga	Narthang	Lhasa	Combined
Number of Bka' 'gyur Sutra Non-Standardised Pages							
'Dul ba	7,510	9,092	7,859	7,859	12,163	11,402	7,510
Sher phyin	15,168	16,613	15,053	15,057	21,339	21,181	15,198
Paritta	237	246	208	208	340	350	237
Phal chen	3,179	3,383	3,087	3,085	4,529	4,434	3,179
dKon brtsegs	3,957	4,003	3,500	3,550	5,520	5,506	3,957
mDo sde	19,421	21,365	18,286	18,629	29,019	29,520	20,064
Myang 'das	1,431	1,586	1,360	1,360	2,239	2,109	1,431
Total Sutra	50,903	56,287	49,353	49,747	75,148	74,502	51,576
Number of Bka' 'gyur Tantra Pages							
rGyud	11,837	12,629	12,199	12,191	16,482	17,791	13,064
rNying rgyud	1,886	2,041	1,906	1,906	2,647	2,870	1,887
Dus 'khor 'grel bshad	N/A	N/A	936	936	N/A	N/A	1,043
gZungs 'dus	1,781	1,821	1,070	1,070	25	17	2,349
sMon lam	42	60	47	47	N/A	N/A	59
Total Tantra	15,546	16,550	16,158	16,149	19,153	20,678	18,402
Total Bka' 'gyur	66,449	72,837	65,511	65,897	94,301	95,181	69,978

The Bka' 'gyur Sutra Genres: Average Number of Pages per Text by Genre							
Genre	Peking	Cone	Derge	Urga	Narthatang	Lhasa	Combined
Bka' 'gyur Sutra Average Number of Pages per Text							
'Dul ba	939	1,136	982	982	1,520	1,425	939
Sher phyin	892	977	654	655	928	921	661
Paritta	18	19	16	16	26	27	18
Phal chen	3,179	3,383	3,087	3,085	4,529	4,434	3,179
dKon brtsegs	81	82	71	72	113	112	81
mDo sde	73	81	69	70	107	108	72
Myang 'das	1,431	1,586	1,360	1,360	2,239	2,109	1,431
Total Sutra	143	160	137	137	205	202	138
Bka' 'gyur Tantra Average Number of Pages per Text							
rGyud	26	28	26	26	42	42	27
rNying rgyud	105	113	100	100	147	159	99
Dus 'khor 'grel bshad	N/A	N/A	936	936	N/A	N/A	1,043
gZungs 'dus	6.7	6.8	4.4	4.4	3.1	16.9	8.8
sMon lam	2.3	3.3	2.4	2.4	N/A	N/A	2.3
Total Tantra	21	22	21	22	46	47	23
Total Bka' 'gyur	60	66	59	59	120	117	60

* Note: The average page size and amount of text on a page varies by collection so the data is not comparable across columns, except that the data for the Combined *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur* is stated in equivalent number of Peking pages, thus it can be compared with the data for the Peking *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur*.

* 1 page = 1 side of a 2-sided folio

The Bstan 'gyur Genres: Number of Texts by Genre					
Genre	Peking	Narthatang	Cone	Derge	Combined
Sutra					
bsTod tshogs	63	64	64	71	73
Sher phyin	40	40	38	38	41
dBu ma	257	257	158	158	264
mDo sde	40	40	40	40	40
Sems tsam	66	66	66	66	66
mNgon pa	18	18	18	18	18
'Dul ba	45	45	46	46	47
sKyes rab	8	8	8	8	8
sPring yig	42	42	45	45	45
Tshad ma	69	69	66	66	69
sGra mdo	28	28	36	36	37
gSo ba rig pa	7	7	7	7	7
bZo rig pa	17	17	15	15	21
Lugs kyi bstan bcos	12	21	18	18	24
sNa tshogs	132	131	77	122	142
Total Sutra	844	853	702	754	902
Tantra					
rGyud	3,136	3,129	2,623	2,623	3,191
Total Bstan 'gyur	3,980	3,982	3,325	3,377	4,093
Total Bka' 'gyur and Bstan 'gyur	5,092	4,769	4,435	4,495	5,262

The Bstan 'gyur Genres: Number of Pages by Genre					
Genre	Peking	Narthang	Cone	Derge	Combined
Sutra					
bsTod tshogs	590	556	590	514	613
Sher phyin	10,603	10,342	9,508	9,118	10,664
dBu ma	12,640	12,356	10,725	10,850	13,506
mDo sde	6,658	6,444	5,679	5,561	6,658
Sems tsam	10,433	10,055	8,984	8,894	10,433
mNgon pa	7,464	7,246	6,399	6,334	7,464
'Dul ba	12,350	11,732	10,446	10,227	12,354
sKyes rab	2,367	2,238	2,850	2,776	2,367
sPring yig	678	640	551	551	694
Tshad ma	15,761	15,303	13,016	12,785	15,761
sGra mdo	1,394	1,247	2,621	2,565	2,882
gSo ba rig pa	4,026	3,852	3,583	3,531	4,026
bZo rig pa	278	319	191	196	307
Lugs kyi bstan bcos	128	466	339	355	653
sNa tshogs	10,106	9,652	3,617	6,564	10,173
Total Sutra	95,476	92,448	79,100	80,823	98,555
Tantra					
rGyud	62,317	59,937	46,933	46,513	63,270
Total Bstan 'gyur	157,792	152,384	126,033	127,335	161,825
Total Bka' 'gyur and Bstan 'gyur	224,241	246,685	198,869	192,846	231,802

The Bstan 'gyur Genres: Average Number of Pages per Text by Genre					
Genre	Peking	Narthang	Cone	Derge	Combined
Sutra					
bsTod tshogs	9.4	9	9	7	8
Sher phyin	265	259	250	240	260
dBu ma	49	48	68	69	51
mDo sde	166	161	142	139	166
Sems tsam	158	152	136	135	158
mNgon pa	415	403	356	347	296
'Dul ba	274	261	227	222	263
sKyes rab	296	280	356	347	296
sPring yig	16	15	12	12	15
Tshad ma	228	222	197	194	228
sGra mdo	50	45	73	71	78
gSo ba rig pa	575	550	512	504	575
bZo rig pa	16.4	19	13	13	15
Lugs kyi bstan bcos	11	22	19	20	27
sNa tshogs	77	74	47	54	72
Total Sutra	113	108	113	107	109
Tantra					
rGyud	20	19	18	18	20
Total Bstan 'gyur	40	38	38	38	40
Total Bka' 'gyur and Bstan 'gyur	44	52	45	43	44

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For biographies of conference participants, please contact linda@khyentsefoundation.org

Conference Program

Conference Program					
	Monday, March 16	Tuesday, March 17	Wednesday, March 18	Thursday, March 19	Friday, March 20
9:00 AM	<p>View/Vision Opening Ceremony Opening Remarks <i>Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche</i></p> <p>Messages from the Honorary Patrons (Letters)</p> <p>Keynote Address <i>Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche</i></p>	<p>View/Vision Presentations <i>Orgyen Tobgyal Rinpoche</i> <i>Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche</i></p> <p>The BDK Tripitaka Translation Project <i>John McRae</i></p> <p>The Kangyur Translation Project <i>Peter Skilling (Video)</i></p> <p>Message <i>Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche (Letter)</i></p>	<p>Challenges & Opportunities Talk <i>Robert Thurman</i></p> <p>Talk on Previous Conferences <i>Lama Daboom Tulku,</i> <i>Jules Levinson</i></p> <p>Remarks <i>John McRae</i></p> <p>Review Issue Tree</p>	<p>Priorities & Action Plans Talk <i>Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche</i></p> <p>Talk <i>Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche</i></p> <p>Group Dialogue on: Leadership</p>	<p>Next Steps & Resolutions Talk by <i>Pema Wangyal Rinpoche</i></p> <p>Talk by <i>Matthieu Ricard</i></p> <p>Report Back to Whole Group: Break-out Group 3: Tools & Resources</p>
10:00 AM					
11:00 AM	<p>Tea Break</p> <p>Getting to Know Each Other: Introduction of Translators</p>	<p>Tea Break</p> <p>Break-Out Groups: Developing the 25-Year Goal</p>	<p>Tea Break</p> <p>Group Dialogue: Top Priorities for First 5 Years What do we need to do now to achieve the 5-year goal?</p>	<p>Tea Break</p> <p>Group Dialogue on: Organisational Structure</p>	<p>Tea Break</p> <p>Report Back to Whole Group: Break-out Groups 4 & 5: 4. Collaboration with Tibetan Teachers 5. Priority Texts</p>
11:30 AM					
12:30 PM	<p>Lunch</p>	<p>Lunch</p>	<p>Lunch</p>	<p>Lunch</p>	<p>Lunch</p>
2:00 PM	<p>Group Dialogue: Defining the 100-Year Vision</p>	<p>Break-Out Groups: Developing the 5-Year Goal</p>	<p>Break-Out Groups on Top Priorities: 1. Community of Translators 2. Training Translators</p>	<p>Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche Accepts Leadership Role</p> <p>Message <i>Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche (Video)</i></p>	<p>Message <i>Jeffrey Hopkins (Video)</i></p> <p>Next Steps, Pledges, Naming and Resolutions</p>
3:30 PM	<p>Tea Break</p>	<p>Tea Break</p>	<p>Tea Break</p>	<p>Tea Break</p>	<p>Tea Break</p>
4:00 PM	<p>Group Dialogue (continued): Defining the 100-Year Vision</p>	<p>Report Back to Whole Group Group Dialogue to align on: 25-Year Goal 5-Year Goal</p>	<p>Report Back to Whole Group</p>	<p>Break-out Groups: 3. Tools & Resources 4. Collaboration with Tibetan Teachers 5. Priority Texts</p>	<p>Concluding Remarks <i>Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche</i> <i>Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche</i> Dedication Ceremony</p>

Pre-Conference Survey – Principal Themes

Summary

There is strong overall alignment among translators about the purpose, vision, and short- and medium-term priorities for the translation world. The individual replies form an integrated picture, and each translator emphasises different aspects of this picture. However, when it comes to selecting the top three priority texts, no clear conclusions emerge. There is strong agreement that the conference agenda should focus on solving the short and medium term issues identified.

What is the overall purpose of translation?

(1) **Accessibility:** The most frequently mentioned purpose of translation is to make Buddhist teachings accessible to a wider audience of people who do not speak Tibetan: “To make the meaning of a text just as accessible to a reader in the target language as the original would have been to a reader in the original language”, “to communicate one’s best understanding of the source text to one’s intended readers” and “to present the material in the original language with accuracy, clarity, and beauty (in that order of priority)”.

(2) **Transmission:** Many translators focus on the “ultimate” purpose of translation as facilitating the transmission of the living dharma tradition to the West in order to support practitioners on the path: “The ultimate purpose is to convey the meaning of the Buddhist teachings to support an individual’s path to enlightenment”, “to provide Buddhist practitioners with the tools they need to attain enlightenment, and to ensure the continuity of the dharma” and “to facilitate the transmission – that is, the knowledge and, above all, the practice – of the Buddhadharmā to the West.”

(3) **Conservation:** A few translators also mention the specific need to preserve and conserve the dharma and Tibetan’s unique literary heritage.

What is your vision for how the translation world would ideally look in 100 years?

(1) **Translated texts:** The most frequently mentioned aspect of the vision is quantitative output, namely the number

of texts that have been translated. The most ambitious visions speak of completion: “by then we’d be ‘done’ in the sense that what exists in the Asian languages would be in Western languages” and “the entire *Kangyur*, *Tengyur*, *Nyingmay Gyudbum*, the *gsung bums* of all the major Lamas of all Tibetan Orders will have been translated into English, as well as German, Russian, modern Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese, modern Japanese, and possibly Arabic and Turkish”. Others speak of progress along this path, with the “most important texts” translated and a “coherent and comprehensive program of translation under way” for the rest.

(2) **Enablers (Training, Funding, and Tools):** Three ‘enablers’ of a large-scale translation program are mentioned with similar frequency:

(a) Training translators, both in dharma and translation itself: “some minimal degree of spiritual training, both intellectual and contemplative, as well as learning the original languages,” and “Training of translators in: (i) Language, both source and target tongues, and (ii) Dharma, both in view and practice.”

(b) Funding, both to support translation as a viable career option and to ensure that texts are as widely available as possible, ideally without charge.

(c) Tools and resources for translators, such as a searchable database of digitised texts, a comprehensive dictionary, and thorough research and greater agreement on technical terms.

(3) **Other aspects:** Several other specific considerations are mentioned less frequently, including:

(a) Safeguarding the secrecy of restricted texts.

(b) Greater cooperation: among translators themselves, between Western translators and Tibetan lamas, and between practitioner-translators and academic translators.

(c) Greater understanding of Tibetan buddhist practice, literature, language and history, and greater integration of buddhist wisdom into Western thought: “Buddhist insights that are relevant to the fields of religion, philosophy, physics, psychology (clinical and academic), neuroscience, and education will be accurately and clearly available, so that many of them are assimilated into modern understanding of those fields” and “the view of dependent origination is thoroughly understood by Western philosophers.”

What are the most important things that need to happen both in the short-term (1-5 years) and the medium term (10-20 years)?

Most frequently mentioned (15+ replies)

- (1) Training of translators (as above)
- (2) Funding (as above)

Very frequently mentioned (11-15 replies)

- (1) Access to learned Tibetan teachers and enabling greater collaboration between Tibetan teachers and translators, including wider use of bi-lingual teams of translators

Frequently mentioned (6-10 replies)

- (1) Standardising terminology over the medium term, or at least narrowing the choices.
- (2) Greater coordination and collaboration to create a real, living, functional community of translators
- (3) Developing new tools for translators, such as new translation technologies, searchable databases of texts, etc.

Less frequently mentioned (2-5 replies)

- (1) Developing and agreeing a priority list of texts to be translated
- (2) Developing a system of peer review, quality control and verification for translations

For complete pre-conference survey, please contact linda@khyentsefoundation.org

Message from Sogyal Rinpoche

Sogyal Rinpoche's message was posted on the main conference notice board for the duration of conference

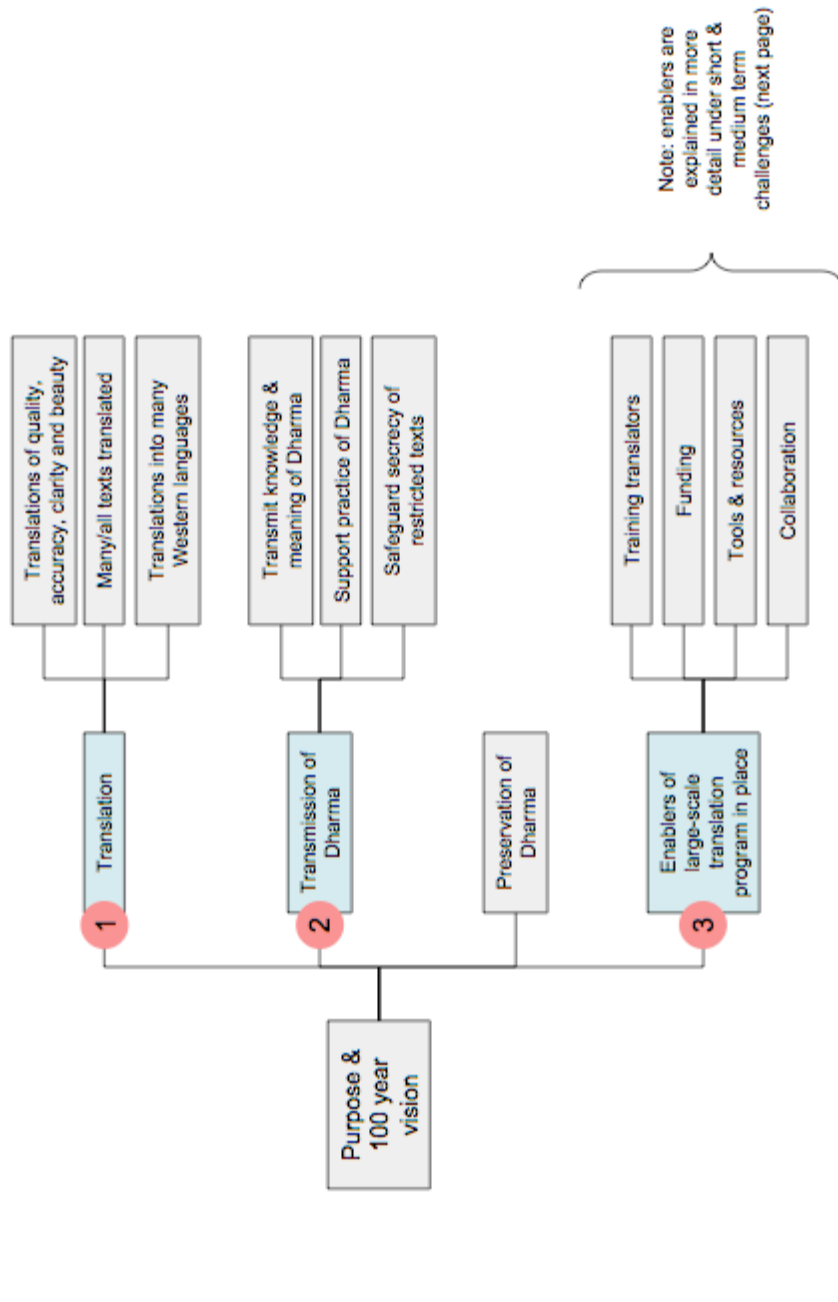
It has been a joy to witness the steady growth in Tibetan Buddhist translation over the last few decades. Now, with many different individuals and groups around the world participating in this noble and historic endeavour, it is crucial that we work together and strive to produce translations that are as accurate, authentic and accessible as possible. It is my hope that through conferences such as this, translators can come to recognize the critical role they play in ensuring the longevity of these teachings, and, with a common vision and

understanding, carry out their task in a spirit of harmony, collaboration and humility, and always with the purest motivation. In so doing, and by building upon the pioneering efforts of earlier generations, we can make an important and lasting contribution to the future of the Buddhadharma, and, indeed, of humanity itself.

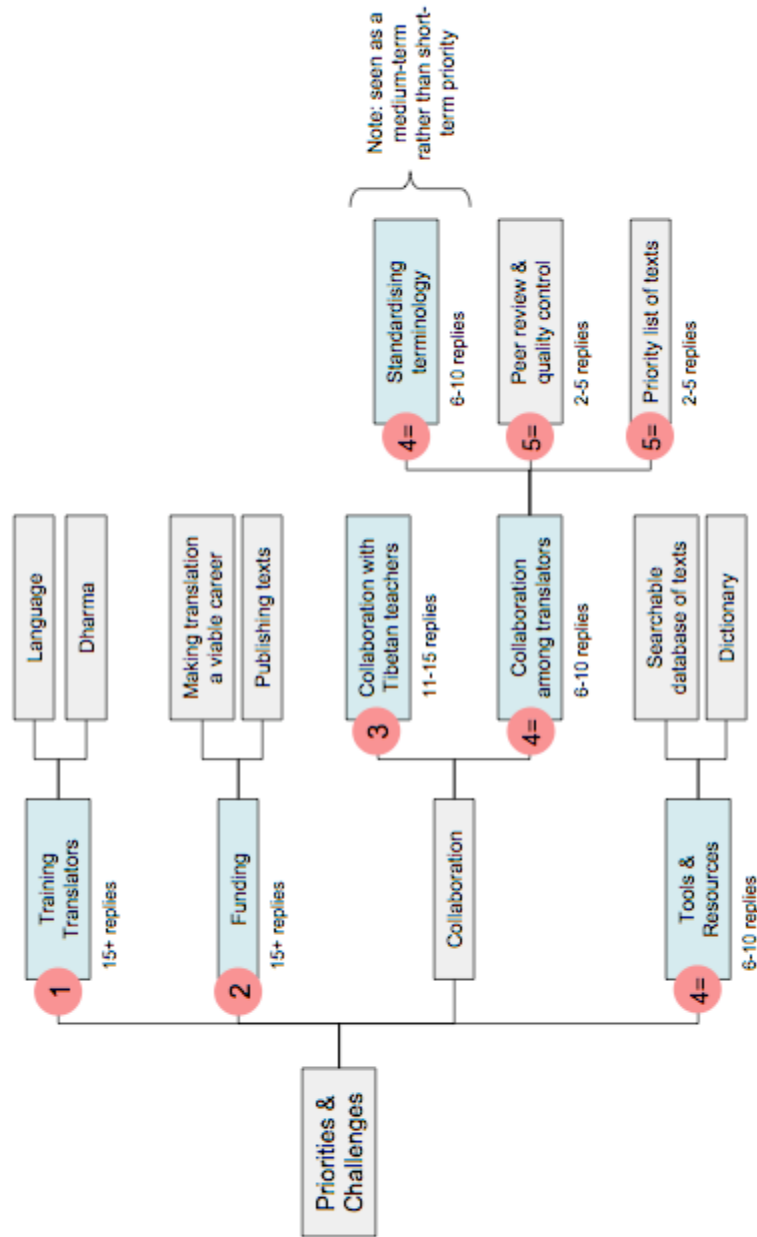
[Letter dated 15 August 2008]

Pre-Conference Survey – Issue Tree: Purpose & Vision

Purpose & Vision



Priorities and Challenges for Short- and Medium-Term



Key: numbers in red circles are priorities established by translators in pre-conference survey (frequency of replies identifying each topic as a priority is indicated)

Acknowledgements – Conference Mandala

Hosted by: Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, Deer Park Institute

Sponsored by: Khyentse Foundation

Honorary Patrons: His Holiness the Dalai Lama, His Holiness Sakya Trizin, His Holiness the late Mindrolling Trichen, His Holiness the Karmapa, Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche, Sogyal Rinpoche, Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche

Chaired by: Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche

Speakers & Participants: Alexander Berzin, John Canti, Ane Kunga Chödrön, Joshua W. C. Cutler, Cortland J. Dahl, Catherine Dalton, Jake Dalton, Tyler Dewar, Ding Nai-Chu, Lama Doboomb Tulku Rinpoche, Andreas Doctor, Gyurme Dorje, John Dunne, Wulstan Fletcher, Jessie Friedman, Steven Goodman, Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltzen, Jeffrey Hopkins (by video), Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche, Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche, Gavin Kilty, David Kittlestrom, Anne Carolyn Klein, Derek Kolleeny, Dzigar Kongtrül Rinpoche, Jakob Leschly, Gwenola Le Serrec, Jules Levinson, David Lunsford, Michele Martin, John McRae, Larry Mermelstein, Chok Tenzin Monlam, Elizabeth Napper, Joan Nicell, Zagsa Paldor, Ani Jinpa Palmo, Ani Lodrö Palmo, Adam Pearcey, Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, Raji Ramanan, Matthieu Ricard, Marcia B. Schmidt, Peter Skilling (by video), Gene Smith, Phillip Stanley, Robert Thurman Orgyen Tobgyal Rinpoche, Martijn van Beek, Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche, Jeff Watt, Christian K. Wedemeyer, Scott Wellenbach, Thomas Yarnell

Observers & Special Guests: Ang Chui Jin, Matthew Akester, Peter Aronson, Martha Bonzi, Amelia Chow, Trish Deitch, Dr. Sonam Dolma, Khenpo Choying Dorji, Prof Gangnegi, Suresh Jindal, Stanley Lai, Frank Lin, Kelly Lin, Greg Seton, Lama Sonam Phuntsho, Drubgyud Tenzin Rinpoche, Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo, Tim Walton, Yong Siew Chin

Advisors: Jeffrey Hopkins, Gene Smith

Program Advisory Committee: Tyler Dewar on behalf of Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche (Chair), Wulstan Fletcher, Steven Goodman, Derek Kolleeny, Larry Mermelstein

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Cultural Performances: Vidya Rao, Arjun Sen

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